(2-)

THE WAY TO KEEP HIM, A COMEDY,

In THREE ACTS:

As it is perform'd at the Theatre Royal in *Drury-Lane*.

Connubio jungam ſtabili, propriamque dicabo.
VIRG.

The SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:
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BRITISH MUSEUM

ADVERTISEMENT.

A Poem * of Dr. SWIFT's, (with all due Deference to the Ladies, that Poem is mentioned) gave the Author the firſt Idea of a Comedy on this Subject. He had not thought ſufficiently of it, to form any regular Plan, when *La Nouvelle Ecole des Femmes*, of Monſieur *De Moiſſy*, fell into his Hands. There were Circumſtances and Sentiments in that Piece, which coincided with his Deſign; and he alſo had ſome Objections. The Huſband's viſiting a Lady of Faſhion, under his own Name, and paſſing upon her for an unmarried Man; the *Chevalier*'s Attempt upon his Friend's Honour, without a proper Detection of either of them; the Wife ſinging and dancing about the Stage thro' the whole Laſt Act, in order to reclaim her Huſband, and his Approbation of it; without any other *Denouement*, and without any Situations of Embaraſſment, which the Story ſo naturally tended to, were, in his Opinion, palpable Deficiencies. To ſubſtitute other Materials, to form a Laſt Act entirely new, and to work the whole into an *Engliſh* Comedy, was the Employment of ſome vacant Hours in the laſt Summer. Whether he has been able to do it with any tolerable Spirit, either in the Dialogue, Characters, or Fable, he now ſubmits to the Deciſion of the candid Reader. He acknowledges the public Candour, and he returns his Thanks to Mr. *Garrick*, for his admirable Acting; and to all the Performers concerned in the following Scenes; and alſo in THE DESERT ISLAND.

Lincoln's-Inn,
1ſt *Feb.* 1760.

ARTHUR MURPHY.

* STREPHON and CHLOE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

Lovemore,	Mr. GARRICK.
Sir *Brilliant Faſhion*,	Mr. PALMER.
William, Servant to *Lovemore*,	Mr. KING.

WOMEN.

Mrs. *Lovemore*,	Mrs. YATES.
The Widow *Beſlmour*,	Miſs MACKLIN.
Muſlin, Waiting-woman to Mrs. *Lovemore*,	Mrs. CLIVE.
Mignionet, Maid to Mrs. *Beſlmour*,	Mrs. BRADSHAW.

Pompey, a black Boy belonging to the Widow.

Scene, *LONDON.*

The WAY to KEEP HIM.

ACT. I. SCENE I.

The Hall in Lovemore's *Houſe*; William *at Cards with a Brother-Servant.*

Will. A PLAGUE on it!— I've turn'd-out my Game.—Is Forty-ſeven good? —

Serv. Equal. —

Will. A Plague go with it!— Tierce to a Queen! —

Serv. Equal.

Will. I've ruin'd my Game, and be hang'd to me! —I don't believe there's a Footman in *England* plays with worſe Luck than myſelf.—Four Aces is Fourteen!

Serv. That's hard; — Cruel, by *Jupiter!*

Will. Four Aces is Fourteen;— Fifteen. (*plays.*)

Serv. There's your Equality. —

Will. Very well.— Sixteen; (*plays.*) — Seventeen. (*plays.*)

Enters Muſlin.

Muſlin. There's a couple of you, indeed! — You're ſo fond of the Vices of your Betters, that you're ſcarce out of your Beds, when you muſt pretend to imitate them and their Ways, forſooth! —

Will. Prythee, be quiet, Woman, do. — Eighteen. *(plays.)* —

Muſlin. Set you up indeed, Mr. Coxcomb! —

Will. Nineteen! Clubs. *(plays.)*

Muſlin. Have done with your Foolery, will ye? — And ſend my Miſtreſs word —

Will. Hold your Tongue, Mrs. *Muſlin*, you'll put us out. — What ſhall I play? — I'll tell you, Woman, my Maſter and I deſire to have nothing to ſay to you or your Miſtreſs. — Twenty; Diamonds. *(plays.)*

Muſlin. But I tell you, Mr. Sauce-box, that my Lady deſires to know when your Maſter came home laſt Night, and how he is this Morning?

Will. Prythee, be quiet. — I and my Maſter, ~~are~~ reſolved to be teaz'd no more by you. — And ſo, Mrs. Go-Between, you may return as you came. — What the Devil ſhall I play? — We'll have nothing to do with you, I tell you. —

Muſlin. You'll have nothing to do with us! — But you ſhall have to do with us, or I'll know the Reaſon why. — (*Snatches the Cards out of his Hands.*)

Will.

Will. Death and Fury! — This meddling Woman has deſtroyed my whole Game! —

Muſlin. Now, Sir, will you be ſo obliging as to ſend my Miſtreſs an Anſwer to her Queſtions, how and when your rake-helly Maſter came home laſt Night? —

Will. I'll tell you what, Mrs. *Muſlin*, — you and my Maſter, will be the Death of me at laſt; that's what you will. — In the Name of Charity, what do you both take me for? — Whatever Appearances may be, I am but of mortal Mould. — Nothing ſupernatural about me. —

Muſlin. Upon my Word, Mr. Powder-Puff! —

Will. I have not, indeed! — And ſo, do you ſee, Fleſh and Blood can't hold it always. — I can't be for ever a Slave to your Whims, and your ſecond-hand Airs. —

Muſlin. Second-hand Airs! —

Will. Yes, ſecond-hand Airs! You take 'em at your Lady's Toilets with their caſt Gowns, and ſo you deſcend to us with them. — And then, on the other hand, there's my Maſter! — Becauſe he chuſes to live upon the Principal of his Health, and ſo run out his whole Stock as faſt as he can, he muſt have the Pleaſure of my Company with him in his Devil's Dance to the other World! — Never at home, till Three, Four, Five, Six, in the Morning! —

Muſlin. Ay, a vile, ungrateful, Man, to have ſo little Regard for a Wife that dotes upon him!—And your Love for me is all of a Piece.—I've no Patience with you both!—A couple of falſe, perfidious, abandoned, profligate——

Will. Hey, hey,—Where's your Tongue running?—My Maſter is, as the World goes, a good Sort of a civil Kind of a Huſband, and I,—Heav'n help me,—a poor Simpleton of an amorous, conſtant, Puppy, that bears with all the Follies of his little Tyrant here.—Come and kiſs me, you Jade, come and kiſs me.—

Muſlin. Paws off, *Cæſar*!—Don't think to make me your Dupe.—I know, when you go with him to this new Lady, this *Bath* Acquaintance; and I know you're as falſe as my Maſter, and give all my Dues to your Mrs. *Mignionet* there.—

Will. Huſh, Not a Word of that!—I'm ruined, preſſed, and ſent on-board a Tender directly, if you blab that I truſted you with that Secret.—But, to charge me with Falſehood,—Injuſtice, and Ingratitude! My Maſter, to be ſure, does drink an agreeable Diſh of Tea with the Widow:—Has been there every Night this Month paſt.—How long it will laſt, Heav'n knows!—But thither he goes, and I attend him.—I aſk my Maſter, Sir, ſays I, what Time would you pleaſe to want me?—He gives me his Anſwer, and then

then I ſtrutt by Mrs. *Mignionet*, without ſo much as tipping her one Glance; ſhe ſtands watering at the Mouth; and, a pretty Fellow that, ſays ſhe.—Ay, ay, gaze-on, ſays I, gaze-on;—I ſee what you would be at:—You'd be glad to have me,—— You'd be glad to have me!—But, ſour Grapes, my Dear! I'll go home and cheriſh my own lovely Wanton;—and ſo I do, you know I do.—Then, after Toying with thee, I haſten back to my Maſter; later indeed than he deſires, but always too ſoon for him.—— He's loth to part; He lingers and dangles, and I ſtand cooling my Heels.—— O! to the Devil I pitch ſuch a Life!—

Muſlin. Why don't you ſtrive to reclaim the vile Man, then?

William. Softly, not ſo faſt;—I have my Talent to be ſure! yes, yes, I have my Talent; ſome Influence over my Maſter's Mind: But can you ſuppoſe, that I have Power to turn the Drift of his Inclinations, and lead him as I ~~please~~ *choose*!—and to whom?—to his Wife! Pſhaw!—Ridiculous,—fooliſh, and abſurd!

Muſlin. Mighty well, Sir! Can you proceed?

Will. I tell you a Wife is out of Date, now-a-Days;—Time was,—— but that's all over;——a Wife's a Drug now; mere Tar-Water, with every Virtue under Heaven, but nobody takes it.——

Muſlin.

Muſlin. Well, I ſwear, I could ſlap your impudent Face.———

Will. Come and kiſs me, I ſay.———

Muſlin. A Fiddleſtick for your Kiſſes,—while you encourage your Maſter to open Rebellion againſt the beſt of Wives.———

Will. I tell you it's her own Fault; why don't ſhe ſtrive to pleaſe him, as you do me? Come, throw your Arms about my Neck.—

Muſlin. Ay, as I uſed to do, Mr. Brazen!

Will. Then muſt I force you to your own. Good—*(kiſſes her:)*—Pregnant with Delight! Egad if my Maſter was not in the next Room—

Muſlin. Huſh! My Miſtreſs's Bell rings,—how long has he been up?

Will. He has been up—He has been up—'Sdeath you've ſett me all on Fire.———

Muſlin. There, there;———the Bell rings again:—Lett me be gone—*(going.)* Well, but what muſt I ſay? When did he come home?

Will. At Five this Morning, rubbed his Forehead, damn'd himſelf for a Blockhead, went to Bed in a peeviſh Humour, and is now in tip-top Spirits with Sir *Brilliant Faſhion*, in the next Room.

Muſlin. Oh Lud! That Bell rings again!—There, there, lett me be gone. *(She kiſſes him and Exit.*

Will. There goes high and low Life contraſted in one Perſon;—'Tis well I have not told her the whole of my Maſter's Secrets: She'll

She'll blab that he viſits this Widow from *Bath*.—But, if they enquire, they'll be told he does not; the Plot lies deeper than they think, and ſo they'll only get into a Puzzle. ——— So, my Maſter's Bell rings too.— (*Exit.*

SCENE *another Apartment*; *Mrs.* Lovemore, *and a Maid attending her.*

Mrs. Lovem. — This Traſh of Tea! —— I don't know why I drink ſo much of it. — Heigh ho! — I wonder what keeps *Muſlin*:— do you ſtep, Child, with my Compliments to your Maſter, and let him know, I ſhall be glad of his Company to a Diſh of Tea this Morning.—

Maid. Yes, Ma'am.——— (*Exit.*

Mrs. Lovem. Surely, never was any poor Woman treated with ſuch cruel Indifference; nay, with ſuch an open undiſguiſed Inſolence of Gallantry!

Enter Muſlin.

Mrs. Lovem. Well, *Muſlin*, have you ſeen his Prime Miniſter? —

Muſlin. Yes, Ma'am, I have ſeen Mr. *William*, and he ſays, as how my Maſter came home according to Cuſtom, at Five this Morning, and in a huge Pickle.— He's now at Breakfaſt, and has Sir *Brilliant Faſhion* with him.

Mrs. Lovem. Is he there again?

Muſlin.

Muſlin. He is Ma'am; and, as I paſſed by Maſter's Study, I overheard them both laughing as loud as any thing, —

Mrs. Lovem. About ſome precious Miſchief, I'll be ſworn; and all at my Coſt, too! —Heigh ho!

Muſlin. Dear Ma'am, why will you chagrine yourſelf about a vile Man, that is not worth,—no, as I live and breathe,—not worth a ſingle Sigh? —

Mrs. Lovem. What can I do, *Muſlin?*

Muſlin. Do, Ma'am! Lard!— If I was as you, I'd do for him; — As I'm a living Chriſtian, I would.—If I could not cure my Grief, I'd find ſome Comforts, that's what I would.

Mrs. Lovem. Heigh ho! —— I have no Comfort. ——

Muſlin. No Comfort, Ma'am? — Whoſe Fault then? —— Would any Body but you, Ma'am?— It provokes me to think of it! — Would any body, Ma'am, young and handſome as you are, with ſo many Accompliſhments, Ma'am, ſit at home here, as melancholy as a poor Servant out of Place?—And all this for what? —— Why, for a Huſband; and ſuch a Huſband!—— What do you think the World will ſay of you, Ma'am, if you go on this way?

Mrs. Lovem. I care not what they ſay; — I am tired of the World, and the World may be tired of me, if it will: —— My Troubles are my own only, and I muſt endeavour to

bear them. —— Who knows what Patience may do? —— If Mr. *Lovemore* has any Feeling left, my Reſignation may, ſome Day or other, have its Effect, and incline him to do me Juſtice.

Muſlin. But, dear Ma'am, that's waiting for dead Men's Shoes; — Incline him to do you Juſtice! —What ſignifies expecting and expecting?—Give me a Bird in the Hand.—Lard, Ma'am, to be for ever pining and grieving!—Dear Heart!—If all the Women in *London*, in your Caſe, were to ſitt down and die of the Spleen, what would become of all the public Places?—They might turn *Vaux-Hall* to a Hop-Garden, make a Brew-houſe of *Ranelagh*, and lett both the Play-houſes to a Methodiſt-Preacher. We ſhould not have the Racketting with 'em we have now!—" *John*, lett the Horſes be putt to. — " *John*, go to my Lady *Trumpabout*'s, and " invite her to a ſmall Party of twenty or " thirty Card-Tables. — *John*, runn to my " Lady *Cat-Gut*, and let her Ladyſhip know " I'll wait on her to the new Opera.—*John*, " runn as faſt as ever you can, with my " Compliments to Mr. *Varney*, and tell him " I ſhall take it as the greateſt Favour on " Earth, if he will lett me have a Side-Box " for the new Play.—No Excuſe tell him." —They whiſk about the Town, and rantipole it with as unconcerned Looks, and as florid Outſides, as if they were treated at

home like ſo many Goddeſſes, tho' every Body knows Poſſeſſion has *ungoddeſſ'd* them all long ago, and their Huſbands care no more for them,—no, by Jingo, no more than they do for their Huſbands.—

Mrs. *Love*. You run on at a ſtrange Rate.—

Muſlin. (*In a Paſſion.*) Dear Ma'am, 'tis enough to make a Body run on.—If every Body thought like you.——

Mrs. *Love*. If every Body loved like me.—

Muſlin. A Braſs Thimble for Love, if it is not anſwer'd by Love.—What the Deuce is here to do?---Shall I go and fix my Heart upon a Man, that ſhall deſpiſe me for that very Reaſon, and, "Ay," ſays he, "poor "Fool, I ſee ſhe loves me; --- The Woman's "well enough, only ſhe has one inconve-"nient Circumſtance about her: I'm mar-"ried to her, and Marriage is the Devil."--- And, then, when he's going a-roguing, ſmiles impudently in your Face, and, "My Dear, "divert yourſelf, I'm juſt going to kill half "an Hour at the Chocolate-Houſe, or to peep "in at the Play; your Servant, my Dear, your "Servant."--- Fye upon 'em!---I know 'em all.---Give me a Huſband that will enlarge the Circle of my innocent Pleaſures:---But a Huſband now-a-days, Ma'am, is no ſuch a thing.---A Huſband now,---as I hope for Mercy, is nothing at all but a Scare-Crow, to ſhew you the Fruit, but touch it if you dare.---A Huſband!--- the *Devil* take 'em all.

all!---Lord forgive one for ſwearing!---is nothing at all but a Bug-Bear, a Snap-Dragon; a Huſband, Ma'am, is ---

Mrs. *Love.* Prythee, Peace with your Tongue, and ſee what keeps that Girl.---

Muſlin. Yes, Ma'am; ---Why, *Jenny!* --- why don't you come up to my Miſtreſs?--- What do you ſtand a-goſſiping there for?--- A Huſband, Ma'am, is a mere Monſter;--- that is to ſay, if one makes him ſo; then, for certain, he is a Monſter indeed;---and, if one does not make him ſo, then he behaves like a Monſter; and, of the two Evils, by my Troth ---Ma'am, was you ever at the Play of *Catharine* and *Mercutio?*---The vile Man calls his Wife his Goods, and his Cattles, and his Houſhold-Stuff. --- There you may ſee, Ma'am, what a Huſband is; --- a Huſband is ---But here comes one will tell you --- Here comes Sir *Brilliant Faſhion.* --- Aſk his Advice, Ma'am.

Mrs. *Love.* His Advice!---Aſk Advice of the Man who has eſtranged Mr. *Lovemore*'s Affections from me!

Muſlin. Well, I proteſt and vow, Ma'am, I think Sir *Brilliant* a very pretty Gentleman. ---He's the very Pink of the Faſhion;---He dreſſes faſhionably, lives faſhionably, wins your Money faſhionably, loſes his own faſhionably, and does every thing faſhionably; and, then, he is ſo lively, and talks ſo lively, and ſo much to ſay, and ſo never at a Loſs. --- But here he comes.

Enters Sir Brilliant, *ſinging.*

Sir *Brill.* Mrs. *Lovemore*, your moſt obedient very humble Servant. --- But, my dear Madam, what always in a vis-a-vis Party with your *Suivante!*---You will afford me your Pardon, my dear Ma'am, if I avow that this does a little wear the Appearance of *Miſanthropy.*

Mrs. *Love.* Far from it, Sir *Brilliant*;---- We were engaged in your Panegyric.---

Sir *Brill.* My Panegyric! --- Then am I come moſt apropos to give a helping Hand towards making it complete.---Mr. *Lovemore* will kiſs your Hand preſently, Ma'am; --- He has not as yet entirely adjuſted his Dreſs. ---In the mean Time, I can, if you pleaſe, help you to ſome Anecdotes, which will perhaps enable you to colour your Canvaſs a little higher.

Mrs. *Love.* I hope you will be ſure, among thoſe Anecdotes, not to omitt the egregious Exploit of ſeducing Mr. *Lovemore* entirely from his Wife!

(*She makes a Sign to* Muſlin *to go.*

Sir *Brill.* I, Ma'am! --- Lett me periſh, Madam---

Mrs. *Love.* Oh! Sir, I am no Stranger to---

Sir *Brill.* May Fortune eternally forſake me, and Beauty frown on me, if ever- -

Mrs,

Mrs. *Love.* Don't proteſt too ſtrongly, Sir *Brilliant*---

Sir *Brill.* May I never hold four by Honours---

Mrs. *Love.* Nay, but, Sir!---

Sir *Brill.* Ma'am, I am altogether ſtruck with Amazement!---May I never taſte the dear Delight of breaking a *Pharoah*-Bank, or bullying the whole Room at a Brag-Party, if ever I was, in Thought, Word, or Deed, acceſſary to his Infidelity.---I deny all unlawful Confederacy.---

Mrs. *Love.* Oh! Sir, it is in vain to deny!

Sir *Brill.* Nay, but my dear Mrs. *Lovemore*, give me leave:---I alienate the Affections of Mr. *Lovemore!*---Conſider, Madam, how would this tell in *Weſtminſter-Hall.*---Sir *Brilliant Faſhion*, How ſay you, guilty of this Indictment or not guilty?---Not guilty, poſs.---Thus, iſſue is joined;---you enter the Court, and in ſober Sadneſs charge the whole plump upon me, without a Word as to the how, when, and where;---No Proof poſitive;---there ends the Proſecution.

Mrs. *Love.* But, Sir, your ſtating of the Caſe---

Sir *Brill.* Dear Ma'am, don't interrupt----

Mrs. *Love.* Let me explain this Matter.---

Sir *Brill.* Nay, Mrs. *Lovemore*, allow me fair Play.---I am now upon my Defence.---You will pleaſe to conſider, Gentlemen of the Jury, that Mr. *Lovemore* is not a Ward,

nor

nor I a Guardian; that he is his own Master to do as he ~~pleases~~ likes; that Mr. *Lovemore* is fond of Gaiety, Pleasure, and Enjoyment; that he knows how to live; and, if he does not like the Bill of Fare that is catered for him at home, he very naturally goes abroad to seek for something more palatable.

How say ye?---Gentlemen of the Jury?--Not guilty.---- There, Ma'am, you see, Not guilty.

Mrs. *Love.* You run on finely, Sir *Brilliant*; —but don't imagine that this bantering Way —

Sir *Brill.* Acquitted by my Country, Ma'am, you see, — fairly acquitted! —

Mrs. *Love.* Be it so then.—But, you hinted something about Mr. *Lovemore*'s not liking his Bill of Fare at home; — I should be glad you would explain that Matter, Sir.—

Sir. *Brill.* Right, Madam, very right: — I did touch upon that Head. —— It was but slightly;— I did not care, in an open Court, to enlarge further upon that Matter.— But, to be plain, upon my Word, Mrs. *Lovemore*, for a fine Woman like you to be the Dupe of your own false Delicacy, an old-fashioned Kind of Sentiment, a vulgar Prejudice, proscribed by Custom long ago; an antiquated Principle of I know-not-what: — Renounce it altogether;— *vivez*, Ma'am;— do like other People of Condition; mix with other amiable Ladies, who know how to use the Senses

Nature has given them; pluck the Fruit that grows around ye, and bid adieu to the Reign of the melancholy Pleaſures for ever.

Mrs. *Love.* After the very edifying Counſel you give Mr. *Lovemore*, this looſe Strain of yours, Sir *Brilliant*, is not at all ſurprizing;— and, Sir, your late Project—

Sir *Brill.* My late Project!——

Mrs. *Love.* Yes, Sir: Not content with leading Mr. *Lovemore* into a thouſand Diſſipations from all conjugal Affection and domeſtic Happineſs, you have lately introduced him to your Mrs. *Bellmour.*——

Sir *Brill.* Ma'am, he does not ſo much as know Mrs. *Bellmour.*

Mrs. *Love.* Fye upon it, Sir *Brilliant!*— Falſehood is but a poor—

Sir *Brill.* Falſehood I diſdain, Ma'am;— and I, Sir *Brilliant Faſhion*, declare, that Mr. *Lovemore*, your Huſband, is not acquainted with the Widow *Bellmour*;— and, if he was acquainted?—What then?— No ill Conſequence could ~~from~~ thence redound to you.— You don't know that Lady, Ma'am.—But I'll let you into her whole Hiſtory,—— her whole Hiſtory, Ma'am:—— Pray, be ſeated. The Widow *Bellmour's* Hiſtory, is this;— She is one of thoſe Ladies ———

Lovemore ſpeaks within.—William! Is the Chariot at the Door?

Sir *Brill.* We are interrupted.——

Enters

Enter Lovemore.

Love. Very well; —— let the Chariot be brought round directly.--How do you ~~do~~ this Morning, my Dear? Sir *Brilliant*, I beg your Pardon.—How do you, ~~do~~ my Dear?---

(*With an Air of cold Civility.*

Mrs. *Love.* Only a little indiſpoſed in Mind; and Indiſpoſition of the Mind is of no ſort of Conſequence; not worth a Cure.---

Love. I beg your Pardon, Mrs. *Lovemore*; Indiſpoſition of the Mind.--- Sir *Brilliant*, that is really a mighty pretty Ring you have on your Finger.---

Sir *Brill.* A Bauble: Will you look at it?

Mrs. *Love.* Though I have but few Obligations to Sir *Brilliant*, yet I fancy I may aſcribe to him the Favour of this Viſit, Mr. *Lovemore!*

Love. (*Looking at the Ring.*) ---Nay, now poſitively you wrong me;---I was obliged to you for your civil Enquiries concerning me this Morning, and ſo, on my Part, I came to return the Compliment before I go abroad.--Upon my Word 'tis very prettily ſett.---(*Gives it.*

Mrs. *Love.* Are you going abroad, Sir?---

Love. A Matter of Buſineſs;---I hate Buſineſs;--but Buſineſs muſt be done.----(*Examining his Ruffles.*)---Pray ~~is~~ are there any News? ---any News, my Dear?---

Mrs.

Mrs. *Love.* It would be News to me, Sir, if you would be kind enough to lett me know whether I may expect the Favour of your Company to Dinner.

Love. It would be impertinent in me to anſwer ſuch a Queſtion, becauſe I can give no direct poſitive Anſwer to it; --- as Things happen; --- perhaps I may, --- perhaps may not. ---- But don't let me be of any Inconvenience to you; ---- it is not material where a body eats. --- Can I ſet you down any where, Sir *Brilliant?*

Sir *Brill.* I thank you, no; --- my Chariot's in waiting. ——— I have ſome Viſits to make, and ſhall rattle half the Town over preſently.

Love. As you will. --- *à ça*, your Servant, --- Mrs. *Lovemore*, ---- My Dear, (*drawing his Gloves on,*) ---I kiſs your Hand. ---Who waits there? --- (*going, returns,*) Apropos, you have heard what happened? (*to* Sir *Brilliant.*)

Sir *Brill.* When, and where?

Love. A Word in your Ear; --Ma'am, with your Permiſſion. ———

Mrs. *Love.* That cold, contemptuous, Civility, Mr. *Lovemore!* ———

Love. Pſhaw! --- Prithee now; --- How can you, my Dear? --- That's very peeviſh, now, and ill-natured. ------ It is but about a mere Trifle. ---- Hark ye; (*whiſpers,*) I loſt every Thing I play'd for after you went; --- the *Foreigner*, and he, underſtand one another. ———

I beg Pardon, Ma'am, it was only about an Affair at the Opera.

Mrs. *Love.* The Opera, Mr. *Lovemore*, or any thing, is more agreeable than my Company!

Love. You wrong me now; I declare, you wrong me; ---- and, if it will give you any Pleaſure, I'll ſup at home. --- Can't we meet at the *St. Alban*'s to Night? --- (*aſide to Sir* Brilliant.)

Mrs. *Love.* I believe I need not tell you what Pleaſure that would give me: But, unleſs the Pleaſure is mutual, Mr. *Lovemore* --

Love. Ma'am I --- I --- I perceive all the Delicacy of that Sentiment; --- But --- a --- a I ſhall incommode you; --- you poſſibly may have ſome private Party; --- and it would be very impolite in me to obſtruct your Schemes of Pleaſure. --- Would it not, Sir *Brilliant?* (*Laughs.*)

Sir *Brill.* It would be gothic to the laſt Degree. --- Ha! ha!

Love. Ha! ha! --- To be ſure, for me to be of the Party, would look as if we lived together like our Friend Sir *Jealous Hotbrain* and his ſcolding Wife, who are for ever like two Game-Cocks, ready armed to goad and wound one another moſt heartily.--Ha! ha!

Sir *Brill.* The very Thing.---Ha! ha!

Love. So it is, ---- ſo it is. (*Both ſtand laughing.*)

Mrs.

Mrs. *Love.* Very well, Gentlemen; you have it all to yourſelves.

Love. Odſo! (*looking at his Watch,*) I ſhall be beyond my Time. --- Any Commands into the City, Madam? ———

Mrs. *Love.* Commands! —— I have no Commands, Sir.

Love. I have an Appointment there at my Banker's; ----- Sir *Brilliant*, you know old *Diſcount*? ———

Sir *Brill.* What, he that was in Parliament? ———

Love. The ſame; --- *Entire But*, I think, was the Name of the Borough. --- Ha! ha! ha! ---- Ma'am, your moſt obedient; ----Sir *Brilliant*, yours. --- Who waits there? --- no Ceremony. --- Your Servant. [*Exit Singing.*

Sir *Brill.* Bon Voyage! ———

Enter Muſlin.

Muſlin. Did you call, Ma'am?

Mrs. *Love.* Come hither, *Muſlin*; ——— (*Whiſpers her,*) mind what I ſay.---

Muſlin. I'll do it, Madam; I'll do it. [*Exit.*

Mrs. *Love.* He's gone to viſit this Mrs. *Belſmour*, I ſuppoſe. ———

Sir *Brill.* Dear Ma'am, how can you take ſuch a Notion in your Head? ---- But, apropos, ---- that brings us back to the little Hiſtory I was juſt going to give you of the Widow *Belſmour*. ———

Mrs. *Love.* Proceed, Sir.

Sir *Brill.* The Widow *Belſmour*, Ma'am, is a Lady, who, to all the Charms of external Beauty, has added ſuch an Elegance of Underſtanding, and ſuch a Vivacity of Wit, that it is no Wonder all the pretty Fellows are on their Knees to her. --- Her Perſon youthful, blooming, and graceful; ---- and then her Manner! ---- And ſo entertaining! ---- Such Quickneſs in her Tranſition from one thing to another; and every thing ſhe does, does ſo become her! --- Does ſhe ſit ſtill? 'tis an indolent *Venus* before you! --- Does ſhe move? 'tis Beauty walking in conſcious Triumph! To ſee her ſmile, and hear her talk, --- I ſhall glow up into Rapture, and fall to raving if I talk a Moment longer about her! ———

Mrs. *Love.* Pray, finiſh your Picture, Sir.---

Sir *Brill.* 'Tis from the real Life, I aſſure you.---In ſhort, Ma'am, ſhe is a Lady that has been abroad, has ever kept the beſt Company, and has ſuch a Variety of Talents, that, upon my Soul, ſhe knows the whole Theory of agreeable Senſations better than all the Philoſophers in *Europe.* ———

Mrs. *Love.* And to this Theory, ſhe has joined the Practice, I preſume? ———

Sir *Brill.* She has. ———

Mrs. *Love.* I imagined as much.---

Sir *Brill.* Ma'am! ———

Mrs. *Love.* You need not affect to be ſurpriſed, Sir; --- there is no mighty Secret in the Affair. ---- My Accounts of the Lady inform

form me, that ſhe is, as you ſay, young and handſome; has lived a great deal Abroad, buried her Huſband there, is lately come to Town, has taken a Houſe, --- lives at great Expence, receives all the Men of Rank and Fortune. ----- We all know what the World is apt to infer from theſe Appearances.---

Sir *Brill.* I am no Stranger to the Way of the World. --- Every Object has its different Aſpects, its Side-lights; and the World is generally good-natured enough to fix upon the moſt unfavourable Points of View.

Mrs. *Love.* So, then, this is another antiquated Prejudice of mine!

Sir *Brill.* Nothing more certain.———

Mrs. *Love.* Oh! mighty well, Sir! ---She is a very Veſtal; --- come, exhibit your Portrait. ---A Veſtal from your School of Painting will, no doubt, be very curious!———

Sir *Brill.* My dear Madam, conſider what you are ſaying! ----- What is your Charge againſt this Lady? That ſhe is amiable! ---- Surely, Mrs. *Lovemore* ſhould be the laſt Perſon in the World, to reproach her with a Quality, which ſo eminently poſſeſſes herſelf!

Mrs. *Love.* The Gallantry of that Compliment, Sir *Brilliant*, added to your other Favours!———

Sir. *Brill.* What next? --- That ſhe has agreeable Talents! --- What then? As Nature is liberal of Talents to but very few, ſhe makes a kind of Recompence to thoſe

who have ~~none~~ them not by conducing to their Entertainment.---But ſhe is young and handſome!---So periſhable a Quality might, methinks, be ſuffered to bloom without Reproach.---Ay, but ſhe has taken a Houſe, and ſees Company.---It is what ſhe is intitled to, and a fine Picture ſhould be ſeen by People of Rank and Taſte;--- and, ſurely, Madam, your Sex intrenches upon your own Happineſs, by not allowing that a Woman may partake of the innocent Pleaſures of Life, unleſs ſhe has reſigned her Perſon to a Man, and parted with her Liberty!---

Mrs. *Love.* And, ſo, you would perſuade me that Mr. *Lovemore* is not acquainted with her?—

Sir *Brill.* Abſolutely ignorant of him!—and I'll tell you further; ſhe has ſuch a Generoſity of Temper, and ſuch a feeling Heart, that, were ſhe to know him, and to know that his Viſits gave you Pain, ſhe would never be at home for him again.---

Mrs. *Love.* Then, give me leave, Sir;---If you have ſo exalted an Opinion of the Lady, how comes it that you deſiſt from paying your Addreſſes in that Quarter?---

Sir *Brill.* Compulſion, Ma'am;---it is not voluntary.---The Garriſon, I thought, was upon the Point of ſurrendering; but up came my Lord *Etheridge* with his honourable Forces to relieve the Town.---I thought he was out of the Kingdom, but it ſeems he

is

is returned.--- I bribed the Chambermaid yeſterday, and I find he has ſupplanted me; and, ſo, all that remains for me, is to do juſtice to the Lady, and conſole myſelf in the beſt way I can for my Demerits, and the Inſufficiency of my Pretenſions.---

Mrs. *Love.* And am I really to believe all this?---

Sir *Brill.* May the firſt Woman, I putt the Queſtion to, ſtrike me to the Center, with a ſupercilious Eyebrow, if every Syllable is not minutely true;---ſo that, you ſee, Ma'am, I am not the Cauſe of your Inquietude.--- There is not on Earth a Man that could be more averſe from ſuch a thing,---nor a Perſon in the World, who more earneſtly aſpires to prove the tender Eſteem he bears you;---and, Ma'am,---I have long panted for an Opportunity.---(By all that's ſoft ſhe hears me.) (*aſide.*) --- I have long panted, Ma'am, for a tender Moment like this,---with all the Ardor of Love, which Charms like yours alone could kindle!---(*She riſes diſconcerted.*) Were it even at the Expence of my Life!--- (*She walks about uneaſy.*)---You ſee, my dear Ma'am, we both have Cauſe of Diſcontent; we are both diſappointed,---both croſſed in Love,---and ſo, Ma'am, the leaſt we can do is, both heartily to join to ſweeten each other's Cares.

Mrs. *Love.* Sir *Brilliant,* I don't underſtand---(*angrily.*)

Sir

Sir *Brill.* If you will pour the Balm of Love on this poor wounded Heart, you may have the moſt delicious Revenge againſt a Huſband,---who,---from his own perverſe Inclination, his own Inhumanity of Temper,---has, for a long time,---I have ſeen it, Madam,---with Vexation ſeen it,---Yes,---he has long been falſe to Honour, Love, and you!---

Mrs. *Love.* This Uſage, Sir!---you take my Wrongs too much to Heart, Sir!---(*walking about*)---I myſelf, Sir, can remedy my own Afflictions.---But this Preſumption of yours,---upon my word!---This is the moſt unparalleled!---(*walks about and flutters her Fan.*)

Sir *Brill.* Pray, Ma'am, don't break your Fan,---don't break it, Ma'am,---I beg you won't.---

Mrs. *Love.* This is the moſt affronting!---Come to a fine Paſs, indeed!---(*She ſtands looking at her Fan*)---Intolerable Aſſurance!---

Sir *Brill.* Now am I in a ſweet Condition.---The Poet has touched it moſt exquiſitely:---

She views the Story with attentive Eyes,
And pities Procris, *while her Lover dies.*

Mrs. *Love.* Sir, I muſt deſire you will quit my Houſe immediately.---

Sir *Brill.* Don't overheat yourſelf,---conſider, my dear Madam!---

Mrs.

Mrs. *Love.* Sir, I desire ---was ever such Rudeness !---(*rings the Bell.*)

Sir *Brill.* Ma'am, I desist;---I have done; ---but, when you're in a better Humour, pray recollect.---

Mrs. *Love.* Will no body answer there ?

Sir *Brill.* I retire.---" Those eyes that tell us what the Sun is made of;---
" Those Hills of driven Snow.---

Enter Muslin *hastily.*

Sir *Brill.* Ma'am, your most obedient.--- (*Exit.*

Muslin. Did you call, Ma'am ?

Mrs. *Love.* To shew the Gentleman out.-- (*walking angrily.*)

Muslin. The Servants are all in the Hall.

Mrs. *Love.* To be insulted thus by his loose confident Carriage !---

Muslin. As I live and breathe, Ma'am, if I was as you, I would not flutter myself about it.---

Mrs. *Love.* About what ?

Muslin. La !---what signifies mincing Matters ?---I overheard it all.

Mrs. *Love.* You did ;---did you ? (*angrily.*)

Muslin. Ma'am !---

Mrs. *Love.* It does not signify at present.---

Muslin. No, Ma'am, it does not signify; and Revenge is sweet, I think ; and, by my Troth, I don't see why you should stand on

Ceremony with a Huſband that ſtands upon none with you.

Mrs. *Love.* Again!---prythee, Mrs. Malapert, none of your Advice.---How dare you talk in this manner to me?--- Lett me hear no more of this impertinent Freedom!---(*walks about.*

Muſlin. No, Ma'am.--- It's very well, Ma'am.—I have done, Ma'am. — (*diſconcerted, and then ſhe ſpeaks aſide.*)—What the Devil is here to do?—An unmannerly thing to go for to huff me in this manner!—)

Mrs. *Love.* (*Still walking about.*) To make his Character public, and render him the Subject of every Tea-Table throughout this Town, would only ſerve to widen the Breach, and, inſtead of his Neglect, might call-forth his Anger, and ſettle at laſt into a fixed Averſion. — Lawyers, Parting, and ſeparate Maintenance, would enſue. — No; — I muſt avoid that,—if poſſible; I will avoid that!— What muſt be done? ——

Muſlin. What can ſhe be thinking of now? —The ſulky thing, not to be communicative with ſuch a Friend as I am!—What can ſhe mean?——Did you ſpeak to me, Ma'am?—

Mrs. *Love.* Suppoſe I were to try that!— *Muſlin.*

Muſlin. Ma'am!—Now for it.—

Mrs. *Love.* Did *John* follow your Maſter's Chariot, as I ordered?

Muſlin.

Muſlin. He did, Ma'am.

Mrs. *Love.* Where is he?

Muſlin. He's below, Ma'am; — he followed it as far as the Chocolate-Houſe in *St. James's-Street.*

Mrs. *Love.* Are you ſure of that?

Muſlin. You may rely upon it.

Mrs. *Love.* You heard Sir *Brilliant* deny that Mr. *Lovemore* viſits at this Widow *Bellmour's?*

Muſlin. Lard, Ma'am, he's as full of Fibs as a *French* Milliner;—he does viſit there;—I know it all from *William;* — I'll be hanged in my own Garters if he does not.

Mrs. *Love.* I know not what to do! — Heigho! — I think I'll venture. — Let my Chair be ready inſtantly.

Muſlin. Your Chair, Ma'am! —Are you going-out, Ma'am?

Mrs. *Love.* Don't teaze me with your talk, but do as I bid you;—and bring my Capuchin down to the Parlour immediately. (*Exit.*

Muſlin. What is in the Wind now?—An ill-natured Puſs, not to tell me what ſhe is about!—It's no matter;—ſhe does not know what ſhe is about. — Before I'd lead ſuch a Life, I'd take a Lover's Leap into *Roſamond's* Pond.—I love to ſee Company for my Part. —But, Lord bleſs me! I had like to have forgot,—Mrs. *Sugar-Key* comes to my Rout

to-Night.—I had as live ſhe had ſtaid away; —She's nothing but mere Lumber!—ſo formal, that ſhe won't play above 1 Shilling-Whiſt.—How the Devil does ſhe think I'm to make a Shilling Party for her?—There's no ſuch a thing to be done now-a-days,—No Body plays Shilling-Whiſt now!

(*Exit in a Paſſion.*

End of the Firſt ACT.

ACT

ACT II.

SCENE, *a Room at the Widow* Bellmour's, *in which are diſpoſed, up and down, ſeveral Chairs, a Toilette, a Book-caſe, and a Harpſicord*; Mignionet, *her Maid, is ſettling the Toilette.*

Enters Mrs. Bellmour, *reading a Volume of* Pope.

Oh! bleſt with Temper, whoſe unclouded Ray,
Can make To-morrow cheerful as To-day;
She, who can own a Siſter's Charms, and hear
Sighs for a Daughter with unwounded Ear;
That never anſwers till a Huſband cools,
And, if ſhe rules him, never ſhews ſhe rules;

Senſible, elegant, *Pope!*

Charms by accepting, by ſubmitting ſways,
Yet has her Humour moſt when ſhe obeys;
(ſeems to read on.

Mig. Lord love my Miſtreſs! — She's allways ſo happy, and ſo gay! ——

Mrs.

Mrs. *Bell.* Theſe charming Characters of Women! —— 'Tis like a Painter's Gallery, where one ſees the Portraits of all one's Acquaintance! —— Here, *Mignionet*, put this Book in its Place.

Mig. Yes, Ma'am. — There Ma'am, you ſee your Toilette looks moſt charmingly.

Mrs. *Bell.* Does it? —— I think it does. — Apropos, where's my new Song? — Here it lies; — I muſt make myſelf Miſtreſs of it. — (*Plays and ſings a little.*) — I believe I ſhall conquer it preſently, (*riſes and goes towards her Toilette.*) — This Hair of mine is always tormenting me; — always in Diſorder, and ſtraggling out of its Place: — I muſt abſolutely ſubdue this Lock. —— *Mignionet*, do you know that this is a very pretty Song? — 'tis written by my Lord *Etheridge*; —— I poſitively muſt learn it before he comes. — (*ſings a Line.*) — Do you know, *Mignionet*, that I think my Lord not wholly intolerable?

Mig. Yes, Ma'am, I know that.

Mrs. *Bell.* Do you?

Mig. And, if I have any Skill, Ma'am, I fancy you think him more than tolerable.

Mrs. *Bell.* Really! then you think I like him, I ſuppoſe? — Do ye think I like him? — I don't well know how that is; — and yet I don't know but I do like him; — no, — no, — I don't like him neither; —— not abſolutely like; — but I could like, if I had a mind to humour myſelf. —— The Man has a Softneſs

of Manner, an elegant Turn of Thinking, and has a Heart — has he a Heart? —— yes, I think he has; —— and then he is ſuch an Obſerver of the Manners, —— and ſhews the ridiculous of them with ſo much Humour. —

Mig. I'll be whipp'd if you don't get into the Nooſe before the long Nights are over. — Without doubt, Ma'am, my Lord is a pretty Man enough; —but, lack-a-day, what o'that? — You know but very little of him, — your Acquaintance is but very ſhort; —(Mrs. *Bellmour hums a Tune.*) Do, pray, my dear Madam, mind what I ſay; — for, I am at times, I aſſure you, very ſpeculative, — very ſpeculative indeed; —and I ſee very plainly. —Lord, Ma'am, what am I doing! — I'm talking to you for your own good, and you're all in the Air, and no more mind one, no, no more, than if I was nothing at all.

Mrs. *Bell.* (*Hums a tune ſtill.*) Why, indeed, you talk wonderfully well upon the Subject; but, as I know how the Cards lie, and can play the Game myſelf, and as I don't know my Song, — why a body is inclined to give that the Preference. (*Sings.*)

Mig. Ma'am, I aſſure you, I am none of thoſe Servants that bargain for their Miſtreſs's Inclinations; —but I ſee you are going to take a Leap in the Dark. — I don't know what to make of his manner of coming here, with his Chair always brought into the Hall, and the Curtains drawn cloſe about his Ears,

as

as if ——— May I never be married, if I don't believe there is ſomething amiſs in the Affair! ——— Dear Heart, Ma'am, if you won't liſten to me, what ſignifies my living with you? ——— I am of no Service to you! ———

Mrs. *Bell.* I believe I have conquered the Song;— (*runs to her Glaſs,*) How do I look To-day?— Well enough, I think.— Do you think I ſhall play the Fool, *Mignionet*, and marry my Lord?

Mig. You have it, Ma'am, thro' the very Heart of you,—I ſee that.

Mrs. *Bell.* Do you think ſo? — May be I may marry, and may be not. — Poor Sir *Brilliant Faſhion*,—what will become of him? But I won't think about it.

Enter Pompey.

Mrs. *Bell.* What's the Matter, *Pompey*?

Pom. There's a Lady below in a Chair, that deſires to know if you are at home, Madam.

Mrs. *Bell.* Has the Lady no Name?

Pom. She did not tell her Name.

Mrs. *Bell.* How aukward you are!---Well, ſhew her up. [*Exit* Pompey.

Mig. Had not you better receive the Lady in the Dining-Room, Ma'am? --- Things here are in ſuch Confuſion.---

Mrs. *Brill.* No, 'twill do very well here.

I dare ſay it is ſome body I am intimate with, tho' the Boy does not recollect her Name.— Here ſhe comes.

Enter Mrs. Lovemore.

(*They both look with a grave Surpriſe at each other, then curtſey with an Air of diſtant Civility.*)

Mrs. *Bell.* Ma'am your moſt obedient,— (*with a kind of Reſerve.*)

Mrs. *Love.* Ma'am I beg your Pardon for this Intruſion.—(*diſconcerted.*)

Mrs. *Bell.* Pray, Ma'am, walk in;---won't you please to be ſeated? — *Mignionet*, reach a Chair.

Mrs. *Love.* This Chair will do mighty well.

Mrs. *Bell.* I beg you'll ſit from the Door;-- I beg you'll ſit here, Ma'am.— (*Mrs.* Lovemore *croſſes the Stage and they ſalute each other.*

Mrs. *Love.* I'm afraid this Viſit, from one unknown to you, will be inconvenient and troubleſome.

Mrs. *Bell.* Not at all, I dare ſay; — you need not be at the Trouble of an Apology:-- Would you chuſe a Diſh of Chocolate?

Mrs. *Love.* Much oblig'd to you, Not any.

Mrs. *Bell.* *Mignionet*, you may withdraw.

[*Exit* Mignionet.

Mrs. *Love.* Tho' I have not the Pleaſure of your Acquaintance, Ma'am, there is a particular Circumſtance which has determin'd me to take this Liberty with you; for which I intreat your Pardon beforehand.

Mrs. *Bell.* The Requeſt is wholly unneceſſary;—but, a particular Circumſtance, you ſay.—Pray, Ma'am, to what Circumſtance am I indebted for this Honour?

Mrs. *Love.* I ſhall appear perhaps very ridiculous, and indeed I am afraid I have done the moſt abſurd Thing!—But, Ma'am, from the Character you bear for Tenderneſs of Diſpoſition, and Generoſity of Sentiment, I eaſily incline to flatter myſelf, that you will not take Offence at any thing; and that, if it is in your Power, you will afford me your Aſſiſtance.

Mrs. *Bell.* You may depend upon me.

Mrs. *Love.* I will be very ingenuous;—Pray, Ma'am, an't you acquainted with a Gentleman whoſe Name is *Lovemore?*

Mrs. *Bell. Lovemore!* --- No; --- no ſuch Perſon in my Liſt. --- *Lovemore!* --- I don't know him, Ma'am.

Mrs. *Love.* Ma'am I beg your Pardon,--- I am but where I was.---I won't trouble you any further, (*going.*)

Mrs. *Bell.* ('Tis mighty odd, this!) (*aſide*) Madam, I muſt own, my Curioſity is a good deal excited; --- (*takes her by the Hand.*) --- Pray, Ma'am, give me leave;---I beg you will

ſit-

ſit down;---pray, don't think me impertinent;--may I beg to know who the Gentleman is?

Mrs. *Love.* You have ſuch an Air of Frankneſs and Generoſity, that I will open myſelf to you: I have been married to him theſe two Years; I admired him for his Underſtanding, his Sentiment, and Spirit; I thought myſelf as ſincerely loved by him, as my fond Heart could wiſh; but there is, of late, ſuch a ſtrange Revolution in his Temper, I know not what to make of it: --- Inſtead of the Looks of Affection, and Expreſſions of Tenderneſs, with which he uſed to meet me, 'tis nothing now but cold, averted, ſuperficial, Civility. --- While, abroad, he runs on in a wild Career of Pleaſure; and, to my deep Affliction, has fix'd his Affections upon another Object.

Mrs. *Bell.* If you mean to conſult with me in regard to this Caſe, I am afraid you have made a wrong Choice; (there is ſomething in her Appearance that affects me,) (*aſide.*)--Pray, excuſe me, Ma'am; you conſider this Matter too deeply. --- Men will prove falſe; and, if there is nothing in your Complaint but mere Gallantry on his ſide, --- upon my word, I can't think your Caſe the worſe for that.

Mrs. *Love.* Not the worſe!

Mrs. *Bell.* On the contrary, much better. If his Affections, inſtead of being alienated, had been extinguiſh'd, he would have ſunk into a downright ſtupid, habitual, Inſenſibility;

lity; from which it might prove impoſſible to recall him.--- In all Love's Bill of Mortality there is not a more fatal Diſorder,---but your Huſband is not fallen into that Way.--- By your Account, he ſtill has Sentiment; and, where there is Sentiment, there is ſtill Room to hope for an Alteration. --- But, in the other Caſe, you have the Pain of ſeeing yourſelf neglected, and for what? --- for nothing at all; --- the Man has loſt all Senſe of Feeling, and is become, to the warm Beams of Wit and Beauty, as impenetrable as an Ice-houſe.

Mrs. *Lov.* I am afraid, Ma'am, he is too much the Reverſe of this, too ſuſceptible of Impreſſions from every beautiful Object.

Mrs. *Bell.* Why, ſo much the better, as I told you already;---ſome new Idea has ſtruck his Fancy, and he will be, for a while, under the Influence of that.

Mrs. *Love.* (How light ſhe makes of it!) (*aſide.*)

Mrs. *Bell.* But it is the Wife's Buſineſs to bait the Hook for her Huſband with Variety; and to draw him daily to herſelf:--That is the whole Affair; I would not make myſelf uneaſy, Ma'am.

Mrs. *Love.* Not uneaſy! when his Indifference does not diminiſh my Regard for him! Not uneaſy, when the Man I doat on, no longer fixes his Happineſs at home!

Mrs.

Mrs. *Bell.* Ma'am, you'll give me leave to ſpeak my Mind freely.---I have often obſerv'd, when the Fiend Jealouſy is rous'd, that Women lay-out a wonderful deal of Anxiety and Vexation to no Account, when, perhaps, if the Truth were known, they ſhou'd be angry with themſelves inſtead of their Huſbands.

Mrs. *Love.* Angry with myſelf, Madam! ---Calumny can lay nothing to my Charge; ---the Virtue of my Conduct, Madam---

Mrs. *Bell.* Look ye there now,---I wou'd have laid my Life, you wou'd be at that;--- that's the Folly of us all. --- But Virtue is out of the Queſtion at preſent.---I mean the want of Addreſs, and proper Management! It is there that moſt Women fail;---Virtue alone cannot pleaſe the Taſte of this Age.--- It is *La Belle Nature,*---Nature embelliſh'd by the Advantages of Art, that the Men expect now-a-days.

Mrs. *Love.* But, after being married ſo long, and behaving all that time with ſuch an Equality ——

Mrs. *Bell.* Ay, that Equality is the Rock ſo many ſplit upon!---The Men are now ſo immers'd in Luxury, that they muſt have eternal Variety in their Happineſs.

Mrs. *Love.* (She juſtifies him!) *Aſide.*

Mrs. *Bell.* I'll tell you what; you'd venture to lay a Pot of Coffee, that the Perſon, who now rivals you in your Huſband's Affection,

Affection, does it without your good Qualities, and even without your Beauty, by the mere Force of agreeable Talents, and Aſſiduity to pleaſe.

Mrs. *Love*. I am afraid that Compliment ---

Mrs. *Bell*. Let me aſk you, Ma'am, have you ever ſeen this formidable Perſon?

Mrs. *Love*. I think I have.

Mrs. *Bell*. What ſort of a Woman, Pray?

Mrs. *Love*. Formidable indeed!—She was deſcribed to me as one of charming and rare Accompliſhments: And that is, fatally, too true!—I can ſee, in her, the ſenſible, the ſpirited, the — in ſhort, in her I ſee my Ruin!

Mrs. *Bell*. Never throw up the Cards for all that.—Really, Ma'am, without Compliment, you ſeem to have all the Qualities that can diſpute your Huſband's Heart with any Body; but the Exertion of thoſe Qualities, I am afraid, is ſuppreſs'd.—You'll excuſe my Freedom.—You ſhou'd counterwork your Rival by the very ſame Arts ſhe employs.—I know a Lady, now, in your very Situation; — And what does ſhe do? She conſumes herſelf with eternal Jealouſy; whereas, if ſhe wou'd but employ half the Pains ſhe uſes, in teazing herſelf, to viewith the Creature that has won her Huſband from her,—to vie with her, I ſay, in the Arts of pleaſing, — for, it is there a Woman's Pride ſhou'd be piqued,

--- wou'd

—wou'd ſhe do that, take my word for it, Victory wou'd declare in her Favour.

Mrs. *Love*. Do you think ſo, Ma'am?

Mrs. *Bell*. Think ſo!—I am ſure of it;—for, there is this Advantage on her Side, that Virtue is an Auxiliary in her Cauſe,—and Virtue is the beſt beautifying Fluid for the Complexion; it gives a Luſtre to the Features, that cannot be equall'd by any Artifice whatever.

Mrs. *Love*. (What can this mean? I begin to doubt.) (*aſide*.

Mrs. *Bell*. But, even Virtue herſelf muſt condeſcend to call-in external Aid.—Her own native Charms wou'd do, if Men were perfect; but that is not the Caſe; and, ſince Vice can aſſume Allurements, why ſhould not Truth and Innocence have additional Ornaments alſo?

Mrs. *Love*. (I begin to think Sir *Brilliant* has told me truth!) (*aſide*.

Mrs. *Bell*. I have been married, Ma'am, and am a little in the Secret.—It is much more difficult to keep a Heart than win one;—After the fatal Words, for better for worſe, the general way with Wives is to relax into Indolence; and, while they are guilty of no Infidelity, they think that is enough:—But they are miſtaken; there is a great deal wanting;—an Addreſs, a Manner, a Deſire of pleaſing,—an agreeable Contraſt in their Conduct, of grave, and

and gay;—a favourite Poet of mine,—*Prior*,—has expreſſed this very delicately.

Above the fix'd and ſettled Rules
Of Vice and Virtue, in the Schools,
The better Part ſhould ſett before 'em
A Grace, a Manner, a Decorum.

Mrs. *Love*. But when the natural Temper —

Mrs. *Bell*. The natural Temper muſt be forc'd; Home muſt be made a Place of Pleaſure to the Huſband, and the Wife muſt throw infinite Variety into her Manner;—in ſhort, ſhe muſt, as it were, multiply herſelf, and appear to him ſundry different Women on different Occaſions.—And this, I take to be the whole Myſtery; the Way to keep a Man.---But I run on at a ſtrange Rate.—Well, to be ſure, I'm the giddieſt Creature!—Ma'am, will you now give me leave to enquire, how I came to have this Favour? Who recommended me to your Notice?---And pray who was ſo kind as to intimate that I was acquainted with Mr. *Lovemore?*

Mrs. *Love*. I beg your Pardon for all the Trouble I have given you, and I aſſure you, 'tis entirely owing to my being told that his Viſits were frequent here.

Mrs. *Bell*. His Viſits frequent here!---They have impoſed upon you, I aſſure you;---and they have told you, perhaps, that I have robbed you of Mr. *Lovemore*'s Heart!--- Scandal is always buzzing about,---but, I aſſure you, I have

have not meddled with his Heart,--- Oh! Lud, I hear a Rap at the Door, I positively won't be at home. (*Rings a Bell.*

Enter Mignionet.

Mign. Did you call, Madam?

Mrs. *Bell.* I am not at home.

Mign. 'Tis Lord *Etheridge*, Ma'am;---he's coming up Stairs, the Servants told him you were within.

Mrs. *Bell.* Was ever any thing so cross? Tell him there is Company with me, and he'll won't come in. *Mignionet*, run to him.

Mrs. *Love.* Ma'am, I beg I mayn't hinder you.

Mrs. *Bell.* Our Conversation begins to grow interesting, and I wou'd not have you go for the World. I'll won't see my Lord.

Mrs. *Love.* I beg you will, don't let me prevent; I'll step into another Room.

Mrs. *Bell.* Will you be so kind?---There is a Study of Books in that Room, if you will be so obliging as to amuse yourself there, I shall be glad to resume this Conversation again.---He sha'n't stay long.

Mrs. *Love.* I beg you will be in no hurry, I can wait with Pleasure.

Mrs. *Bell.* This is a Lover of mine; and a Husband, and a Lover shou'd be treated in the same manner; perhaps it will divert you to hear how I manage him. I hear him

on the Stairs; for Heaven's ſake, make haſte. *Mignionet*, ſhew the Way.

Mign. This way, Madam, this way.

(*Exeunt Mrs.* Love. *and* Mignionet.

Mrs. *Bell.* Let me ſee how I look to receive him. (*Runs to her Glaſs.*

Enters Lovemore, *with a Star and Ribband, as Lord* Etheridge.

Mrs. *Bell.* (*Looking in her Glaſs.*) Lord *Etheridge!* Walk in, my Lord.

Love. (*Repeats.*)

A heav'nly Image in the Glaſs appears;
To that ſhe bends, to that her Eyes ſhe rears,
Repairs her Smiles ———

Mrs. *Bell.* Repairs her Smiles, my Lord! I don't like your Application of that Phraſe. ---Pray, my Lord, are my Smiles out of repair, like an old Houſe in the Country, that wants a Tenant?

Love. Nay, now, that's wreſting the Words from their viſible Intention.---You can't ſuppoſe I thought you want Repair, whatever may be the Caſe, Ma'am, with regard to the want of a Tenant.

Mrs. *Bell.* And, ſo, you think I really want a Tenant! And, perhaps, you imagine, too, that I am going to putt up a Bill, (*Looking in her Glaſs,*) to ſignify, to all Paſſers-by, that here is a Manſion to be lett.---Well, I ſwear, I don't think it wou'd be a bad Scheme. ---I have a great mind to do ſo.

Love.

Love. And he who has the Preference---

Mrs. *Bell.* Will be very happy; I know you mean ſo. But I'll lett it to none but a ſingle Gentleman, that you may depend upon.

Love. (What the Devil does ſhe mean by that? She has not caught an Inkling of the Affair, I hope.) (*Aſide.*) None elſe could preſume, Madam, to —

Mrs. *Bell.* And, then, it muſt be a Leaſe for Life;—but no Body will be troubled with it;—I ſhall never gett it off my Hands.—Do you think I ſhall, my Lord?

Love. Why that Queſtion, Madam? You know I am devoted to you, even if it were to be bought with Life.

Mrs. *Bell.* Heav'ns! what a dying Swain you are! And does your Lordſhip really intend to be guilty of Matrimony? — Lord, what a Queſtion have I aſked?—Well, to be ſure, I am a very Mad-cap!—My Lord, don't you think me a ſtrange Mad-cap?

Love. A Wildneſs like yours, that ariſes from Vivacity and Sentiment together, ſerves only to exalt your Beauty, and give new Poignancy to every Charm.

Mrs. *Bell.* Well, upon my word you have ſaid it finely!—But you are in the right, my Lord. — I hate your penſive, melancholy Beauty, that ſits like a well-grown Vegetable in a Room for an Hour together, 'till at laſt ſhe is animated to the violent Exertion of

ſaying yes or no, and then enters into a Matter-of-Fact Converſation; "Have you heard the News? Miſs *Beverly* is going to be married to Captain *Shoulderknot*.--My Lord *Mortgage* has had another Tumble at *Arthur*'s; Sir *William Squanderſtock* has loſt his Election. They ſay, ſhort Aprons are coming into Faſhion again."

Love. Oh, Lord! a Matter-of-Fact Converſation is inſupportable!

Mrs. *Bell.* Pray, my Lord, have you ever obſerved the manner of one Lady's accoſting another at *Ranelagh*?—She comes up to you with a demure Look of inſipid Serenity,—makes you a ſolemn Salute;—— "Ma'am, I am overjoyed to meet you,—you look charmingly.—But, dear Madam, did you hear what happened to us all the other Night?—We were going home from the Opera, Ma'am;---you know my Aunt *Roly-Poly*,---It was her Coach,---there was ſhe,--- and Lady *Betty Fidget*,---Your moſt obedient Servant, Ma'am, (*Curtſeying to another, as it were going by.*) Lady *Betty*, you know, is recovered;--- every Body thought it over with her,---but Doctor *Snakeroot* was called in; no, not Doctor *Snakeroot*, Doctor *Bolus* it was, and ſo he altered the Courſe of the Medicines,---and ſo my Lady *Betty* recovered;---well, there was ſhe and Sir *George Bragwell*, ---a pretty Man Sir *George*,---fineſt Teeth in the World.---Your Ladyſhip's moſt obedient.

ent.---We expected you laſt Night,---but you did not come,---he! he!---And ſo there was he, and the reſt of us,---and ſo, turning the Corner of *Bond-Street*, the Villain of a Coachman ---How do you do, Madam?---The Villain of a Coachman overturned us all;---my Aunt *Roly-Poly*, was frightened out of her Wits, and Lady *Betty* has been *nerviſh* ever ſince:---Only think of that!---ſuch Accidents in Life!---Ma'am, your moſt obedient,---I am proud to ſee you look ſo well."

Love. An exact Deſcription! --- the very thing!---ha! ha!

Mrs. *Bell.* And then, from this Converſation, they all run to Cards;---" *Quadrille has murdered Wit.*"

Love. Ay, and Beauty too; for, upon theſe Occaſions, "the Paſſions in the Features are---" I have ſeen many a beautiful Countenance change, in a Moment, into abſolute Deformity; the little Loves and Graces, that before ſparkled in the Eye, bloom'd in the Cheek, and ſmil'd about the Mouth, all fly-off in an Inſtant, and reſign the Features, which they before adorn'd, to Fear, to Anger, to Grief, and the whole Train of fretful Paſſions.

Mrs. *Bell.* Ay, and the Rage we poor Women are often betrayed into on theſe Occaſions!---

Love. Very true, Ma'am; and if, by chance, they do bridle and hold in a little, the Struggle they undergo is the moſt ridiculous Sight imaginable.

imaginable. —I have ſeen an Oath quivering upon the pale Lip of a reigning Toaſt, for Half-an-Hour together; yes, and I have ſeen an uplifted Eye blaſpheming Providence for the Loſs of an odd Trick;—and then, at laſt, when the whole Room burſt out into one loud univerſal Uproar,-" My Lord, you flung away the Game!-No, Ma'am, it was you.-Sir *George*, why did not you rough the Diamond? Capt. *Hazard*, why did not you lead through the Honour? Ma'am, it was not the Play.--- Pardon me, Sir, ---But Ma'am,--- But Sir,--- I would not play with you for Straws.-Don't you know what *Hoyle* ſays? If A and B are Partners againſt C and D, and the Game Nine-all, A and B have won three Tricks, and C and D four Tricks; C leads his Suit, D puts up the King then returns the Suit, A paſſes, C puts up the Queen, B roughs the next:" and ſo A and B, and C and D, are bang'd about; and all is Jargon, Confuſion, Uproar, and Wrangling, and Nonſenſe, and Noiſe!---Ha! ha!

Mrs. *Bell*. Ha! ha! A fine Picture of a Rout; but one muſt play ſometimes;--we muſt lett our Friends pick our Pockets ſometimes, or they'll drop our Acquaintance.--- Pray, my Lord, do you never play?

Love. Play, Ma'am!——(I muſt lie to the End of the Chapter!) (*aſide*;) play! —— now and then out of Neceſſity; — otherwiſe, — I never touch a Card.

Mrs. *Bell.* Oh! very true, you dedicate your Time to the Muſes; a downright rhyming Peer. — Do you know, my Lord, that I am charm'd with your Song?

Love. Are you?

Mrs. *Bell.* I am indeed; — I think you'd make a very tolerable *Vauxhall* Poet.

Love. You flatter me, Ma'am.

Mrs. *Bell.* No, as I live and breathe, I don't; — and do you know that I can ſing it already? — Come, you ſhall hear me; — you ſhall hear it. *(ſings.)*

I.

Attend, all ye Fair, and I'll tell ye the Art
To bind every Fancy with eaſe in your Chains,
To hold in ſoft Fetters the conjugal Heart,
And baniſh from Hymen *his Doubts and his*
(Pains.

II.

When Juno *accepted the Ceſtus of Love,*
At firſt ſhe was handſome; ſhe charming be-
(came;
With Skill the ſoft Paſſions it taught her to move,
To kindle at once, and to keep up the Flame.

III.

'Tis this gives the Eyes all their Magic and
(Fire;
The Voice melting Accents; impaſſions the
(Kiſs;
Confers the ſweet Smiles that awaken Deſire,
And plants round the Fair each Incentive to
(Bliſs.

IV.

IV.

Thence flows the gay Chat, more than Reaſon (that charms;
The eloquent Bluſh, that can Beauty im- (prove;
The fond Sigh, the fond Vow, the ſoft Touch (that alarms,
The tender Diſdain, the Renewal of Love.

V.

Ye Fair take the Ceſtus, and practiſe its Art;
The Mind unaccompliſh'd, mere Features are (vain,
Exert your ſweet Power, you conquer each (Heart,
And the Loves, Joys, and Graces, ſhall walk (in your Train.

Love. My Poetry is infinitely oblig'd to you; for the Embelliſhments your Voice and Manner confer upon it.

Mrs. *Bell.* Oh fulſome!— I ſing horridly, and I look horridly; (*goes to the Glaſs*)—How do I look, my Lord? — but don't tell me, — I won't be told. —— I ſee you are ſtudying a Compliment, and I hate Compliments; —— well, what is it? let's hear your Compliment; why don't you compliment me? —— I won't hear it now. — But, pray now, how came you to chooſe ſo grave a Subject as connubial Happineſs?—Do you think there is any ſuch Thing on Earth as connubial Happineſs?

Love.

Love. (Cloſe and particular that Queſtion!) (*aſide.*) Why, Ma'am, in general, one does not ſee the Talents of a Wife dedicated to the Happineſs of the Huſband.——I have known Ladies, who, on the Eve of their Wedding, appear'd like the very Graces, in a few Weeks after the Ceremony become very Slatterns, both in their Perſons and Underſtandings: no Solicitude on their ſide to appear amiable. — Diſtaſte inſinuates itſelf by degrees into the Huſband's Mind, the Bands of *Hymen* grow looſe; and, thus, with, perhaps, the beſt Diſpoſition in the World, he is oblig'd to ſtart wild, and away he urges where Youth and a Career of Spirits hurry him; and ſo good-night to all real and ſolid Happineſs. —— But with one accompliſh'd as you are, Ma'am ———

Mrs. *Bell.* To be ſure, with me no-body cou'd be otherwiſe than happy! — was not that what you were going to ſay? — I know it was.— Well, upon my word, you have drawn your Picture ſo well, that one would imagine you had a Wife at home to ſit for it.

Love. Ma'am, (*embarraſs'd,*) the Compliment, —a— you are but laughing at me;—I I —- I, —(Zouns, I am afraid ſhe begins to ſmoke me!) (*aſide.*) — A very ſcanty Knowledge of the World will ſerve: and — and there is no need of one's own Experience in theſe Caſes:---nor had I talk'd ſo, were I not

perſuaded you will make an Exception to the general Rule.

Mrs. *Bell.* O lard, you are going to plague me again with your odious Solicitations; but I won't hear 'em;—— you muſt be gone. — If I ſhould be weak enough to liſten to you, what would become of Sir *Brilliant Faſhion?*

Love. Sir *Brilliant Faſhion!*

Mrs. *Bell.* Yes, don't you know Sir *Brilliant Faſhion?*

Love. No, Ma'am, I don't know the Gentleman: — I beg Pardon if he is your Acquaintance, but, from what I have heard of him, I ſhou'd not chooſe him to be among my Intimates.

Enter Mignionet *in a violent Hurry.*

Mig. O Lud! I am frighted out of my Senſes,---- The poor Lady!---Where's the Hartſhorn-drops?

Love. The Lady! What Lady?

Mign. Never ſtand aſking what Lady,---- ſhe has fainted away, Ma'am, all of a ſudden! Give me the Drops.---

Mrs. *Bell.* Let me run to her Aſſiſtance.--Adieu, my Lord,—I ſhall be at home in the Evening;- - *Mignionet* ſtep this Way.---My Lord, you'll excuſe me; I expect you in the Evening. (*Exit.*

Lovemore. I ſhall wait on you, Ma'am. What a Villain am I to carry on this Scheme, againſt

againſt ſo much Beauty, Innocence, and Merit?---Ay, and to have the Impudence to aſſume this Badge of Honour, to cover the moſt unwarrantable Purpoſes!---But, no Reflection, have her I muſt; and that quickly too.---If I don't prevail ſoon, I'm undone!---ſhe'll find me out:--- Egad, I'll be with her betimes this Evening, and preſs her with all the Vehemence of Love. --- Women have their ſoft, unguarded, Moments; and, who knows? --- But, to take the Advantage of the Openneſs and Gaiety of her Heart! and then my Friend Sir *Brilliant*, will it be fair to ſupplant him?---Prithee, be quiet, my dear Conſcience; don't you be meddling; don't interrupt a Gentleman in his Amuſements. ----- Don't you know, my good Friend, that Love has no Reſpect of Perſons, knows no Laws of Friendſhip;---beſides 'tis all my Wife's Fault;--why don't ſhe ſtrive to make home agreeable?

For foreign Pleaſures, foreign Joy, I roam,
No Thought of Peace or Happineſs at home.---(going.)

(*Sir* Brilliant *is heard ſinging within*)

What the Devil is Madam Fortune at now?---Sir *Brilliant*, by all that's odious!----- No Place to conceal in!---No Eſcape!---The Door is locked! ---- *Mignionet*, *Mignionet*, open the Door.——

Mig. (*within*) You can't come in here, Sir.

Love. This curſed Star, and this Ribband, will ruin me!----Let me get off this confoun-

ded Tell-tale Evidence! --- (*takes off the Rib-band in a hurry.*)

Enter Sir Brilliant.

Sir *Brill.* My dear Madam, I moſt heartily rejoice---Ha !---*Lovemore !*

Love. Your Slave, Sir *Brilliant*, your Slave, (*hiding the Star with his Hat.*)

Sir *Brill.* How is this? I did not think you had been acquainted here !

Love. I came to look for you; ---I thought to have found you here ; ----- and ſo I have ſcrap'd an Acquaintance with the Lady, and made it ſubſervient to your Purpoſes.---I have been giving a great Character of you.

Sir *Brill.* Well, but what's the matter?--- What are you fumbling about? --- (*pulls the Hat.*)

Love. 'Sdeath! have a care !--for Heaven's ſake!--(*cramms his Handkerchief there.*)

Sir *Brill.* What the Devil ails you ?

Love. Taken ſo unaccountably,---my old Complaint!---Sir *Brilliant*, yours.

Sir *Brill.* Zouns, Man, you had beſt ſit down.

Love. Here's a Buſineſs!--(*aſide,*)---pray, let me paſs ;---my old Complaint.--

Sir *Brill.* What Complaint?

Love. I muſt have a Surgeon,---occaſioned by the Stroke of a Tennis-Ball ; --- my Lord *Racket's* unlucky Left-hand :--- Let me paſs, there is certainly ſomething forming there,---

let me paſs. ----- To be caught is the Devil! (*aſide*,) don't name my Name, you'll ruin all that I ſaid for you, if you do. ----Sir *Brilliant*, your Servant.---There is certainly ſomething forming. [*Exit.*

Sir *Brill.* What can this mean? I muſt have this explain'd.---Then, Mrs. *Lovemore*'s Suſpicions are right! I muſt come at the Bottom of it.—Ay, ay;---there is ſomething forming here!—

Enters Mrs. Bellmour.

Sir *Brill.* My dear Mrs. *Bellmour.*

Mrs. *Bell.* Heaven's! What brings you here?

Sir *Brill.* I congratulate ~~with~~ myſelf upon the Felicity of meeting you thus at home.

Mrs. *Bell.* Your Viſit is unſeaſonable; you muſt be gone.

Sir *Brill.* Madam, I have a Thouſand Things---

Mrs. *Bell.* Well, well, another time.

Sir *Brill.* Of the tendereſt Import.

Mrs. *Bell.* I can't hear you now;---fly this Moment: ---- I have a Lady taken ill in the next Room.

Sir. *Brill.* Ay, and you have had a Gentleman taken ill here too!

Mrs. *Bell.* Do you diſpute my Will and Pleaſure;---fly this Inſtant! (*turns him out.*) So, I'll make ſure of the Door.

Enters

Enters Mrs. Lovemore, *leaning on* Mignionet.

Mign. This way, Madam, here's more Air in this Room.

Mrs. *Bell.* How do you find yourſelf, Ma'am? Pray ſit down.

Mrs. *Love.* My Spirits were too weak to bear up any longer, againſt ſuch a Scene of Villainy!

Mrs. *Bell.* Villainy!—What Villainy!

Mrs. *Love.* Of the blackeſt Dye!—I ſee, Madam, you are acquainted with my Huſband.

Mrs. *Bell.* Acquainted with your Huſband! (*angrily.*)

Mrs. *Love.* A Moment's Patience, Madam.—That Gentleman that was here with you is my Huſband.

Mrs. *Bell.* Lord *Etheridge* your Huſband!

Mrs. *Love.* Lord *Etheridge*, as he calls himſelf, and as you have been made to call him alſo, is no other than Mr. *Lovemore.*

Mrs. *Bell.* And has he then been baſe enough to aſſume that Title, to enſnare me to my undoing?

Mign. Well, for certain, I believe the Devil's in me, I am certainly a Witch; for, I always thought him a ſly one!

Mrs. *Love.* To ſee my Huſband carrying on this dark Buſineſs,---to ſee the Man I have loved,--- the Man I have eſteem'd,--- the Man, I am afraid, I muſt ſtill love, tho' eſteem

eſteem him again I cannot, --- to be a Witneſs to his complicated Wickedneſs,---it was too much for Senſibility like mine,---I felt the Shock too ſeverely,---and ſink under it!

Mrs. *Bell*. I am ready to do the ſame myſelf now! I ſink into the very Ground with Amazement! The firſt time I ever ſaw him was at old Mrs. *Loveit*'s;---ſhe introduc'd him to me;---the Appointment was of her own making.

Mrs. *Love*. You know her Character, I ſuppoſe, Madam.

Mrs. *Bell*. She's a Woman of Faſhion, and ſees a great deal of good Company.

Mrs. *Love*. Very capable of ſuch an Action for all that!

Mrs. *Bell*. Well, I cou'd never have imagin'd that any Woman wou'd be ſo baſe as to paſs ſuch a Cheat upon me! Step this Moment, and give Orders never to let him within my Doors again. (*To her Maid, who goes out.*) I am much oblig'd to you, Ma'am, for this Viſit. To me it is highly fortunate; but I am ſorry for your Share in't, as the Diſcovery brings you nothing but a Conviction of your Huſband's Baſeneſs.

Mrs. *Love*. I have determin'd to be no further uneaſy about him, nor will I live a Day longer under his Roof!

Mrs. *Bell*. Hold, hold, make no violent Reſolutions.---You'll excuſe me, I can't help feeling

feeling for you, and I think this Incident may be ſtill converted to your Advantage.

Mrs. *Love*. That can never be;---I am loſt beyond Redemption!

Mrs. *Bell*. Don't decide that too raſhly.---Come, come, a Man is worth thinking a little about, before one throws the hideous thing away for ever. Beſides, you have heard his Sentiments. Perhaps you are a little to blame yourſelf.---We will talk this very coolly. Ma'am, you have ſav'd me,---and I muſt now diſcharge the Obligation.---You ſhall ſtay and dine with me.

Mrs. *Love*. I can't poſſibly do that; ---I won't give you ſo much Trouble.

Mrs. *Bell*. It will be a Pleaſure, Ma'am; ---you ſhall ſtay with me, I will not part with you; and I will lay ſuch a Plan as may enſure him yours for ever.---Come, come, my dear Madam, don't you ſtill think he has ſome good Qualities to apologize for his Vices?

Mrs. *Love*. I muſt own, I ſtill hope he has.

Mrs. *Bell*. Very well, then, and he may ſtill make Atonement for all; and, let me tell you, that a Man who can make proper Atonement for his Faults ſhould not be entirely deſpiſed.---Allons! (*Exeunt.*

End of the Second ACT.

ACT

ACT III.

SCENE, *An Apartment at Mr.* Lovemore's.

Enter Mrs. Lovemore *elegantly dreſs'd;* Muſlin *following her.*

Muſlin. WHY, to be ſure, Ma'am, it is ſo for certain, and you are very much in the right of it.

Mrs. *Love.* I fancy I am:---I ſee the Folly of my former Conduct, and I am determin'd never to let my Spirits ſink into a melancholy State again.

Muſlin. Why, that's the very thing, Ma'am, the very thing I have been always preaching up to you.---Did not I always ſay, ſee Company, Ma'am; take your ſhare of Pleaſure, and never break your Heart for any Man. This is what I always ſaid.

Mrs. *Love.* It's very well; you need not ſay any more now.

Muſlin. I always ſaid ſo!---And what did the World ſay? Heavens bleſs her for a ſweet Woman! And a Plague go with him for an inhuman, barbarous, bloody, murdering Brute.

Mrs. *Love.* No more of theſe Liberties, I deſire!

Muſlin. Nay, don't be angry;--- they did ſay ſo, indeed.---But, dear Heart, how every Body will be overjoy'd, when they find you have pluck'd up a little;---as for me, it gives me new Life, to have ſo much Company in the Houſe, and ſuch a Racketing at the Door with Coaches and Chairs, enough to hurry a Body out of one's Wits.---Lard, this is another thing, and you look quite like another thing, Ma'am, and that Dreſs ſo becomes you; ---- I ſuppoſe, Ma'am, you'll never wear your Negligée again. It is not fit for you indeed, Ma'am.---It might paſs very well with ſome Folks, Ma'am, but the like of you --

Mrs. *Love.* Prythee, truce with your Tongue, and ſee who is coming up Stairs.

Enters Mrs. Bellmour.

Mrs. *Love.* Mrs. *Bellmour*, I revive at the Sight of you. *Muſlin*, do you ſtepp down Stairs, and do as I have ordered you.

Muſlin. What the Deuce can ſhe be at now? (*Exit.*

Mrs. *Bell.* You ſee I am punctual to my time. --- Well, I admire your Dreſs of all things.---Did you buy this Silk on *Ludgate-Hill*?---It's mighty pretty.

Mrs. *Love.* I am glad you like it. --- But, under all this Appearance of Gaiety, I have at the Bottom but an aching Heart.

Mrs.

Mrs. *Bell.* Be rul'd by me, and I'll anſwer for the Event.---Why, really, now you look juſt as you ſhou'd do.---Why ſhou'd you neglect ſo fine a Figure?

Mrs. *Love.* You are ſo civil, Mrs. *Bellmour.*---

Mrs. *Bell.* And ſo true, too!--- what was beautiful before, is now heightened by the additional Ornaments of Dreſs; and, if you will but animate and inſpire the whole, by thoſe Graces of the Mind, which I am ſure you poſſeſs, the Impreſſion cannot fail of being effectual upon all Beholders, and even upon the depraved Mind of Mr. *Lovemore.*--- You have not heard any thing of him ſince, ---have you?

Mrs. *Love.* No,--- no Account at all of him.

Mrs. *Bell.* I can tell you ſomething.--- He has been at my Houſe. You know I had promis'd to be at home for him;--- not being let in, my Servants tell me, he was ſtrangely diſconcerted, knit his Brow, ſtorm'd, rav'd, wonder'd, and expoſtulated, and then, at laſt, went off as ſullen as a *Ruſſian* General, when a Garriſon refuſes to capitulate.

Mrs. *Love.* If he has no other Haunts, he may perhaps come home.

Mrs. *Bell.* I wiſh he may.--- Well, and have you got together a deal of Company?

Mrs. *Love.* Pretty well.

Mrs. *Bell*. That's right;---ſhew him that you will conſult your own Pleaſure.---Is Sir *Brilliant* of the Party?

Mrs. *Love*. A-propos,---as ſoon as I came home I received a Letter from him; my Maid had taken it in.---He there preſſes his Addreſſes with great Warmth, begs to ſee me again; and has ſomething particular to tell me;---you ſhall ſee it.---Oh! Lud, I have not it about me;---I left it in my dreſſing-Room, I believe; you ſhall ſee it by and by; I took your Advice, and ſent him word he might come;---that Lure brought him hither immediately,--- he makes no doubt of his Succeſs with me.

Mrs. *Bell*. Well! two ſuch Friends as Sir *Brilliant* and Mr. *Lovemore*, I believe, never exiſted!

Mrs. *Love*. Their Falſhood to each other is unparalleled! — I left Sir *Brilliant* at the Whiſt-Table; as ſoon as the Rubber's out, he'll certainly quitt his Company in purſuit of me. — (*a Rap at the Door.*) As I live, I believe this is Mr. *Lovemore*.

Mrs. *Bell*. If it is, every thing goes on ſwimmingly.

Mrs. *Love*. I hear his Voice, it is he. — How my Heart beats!

Mrs. *Bell*. Courage, and the Day's our own.—Where muſt I run?

Mrs. *Love*. In there, Ma'am.--Make haſte; —I hear his Step on the Stair-head.

Mrs.

Mrs. *Bell.* Succeſs attend you;—I am gone.
(*Exit.*

Mrs. *Love. alone.* I am frighten'd out of my Senſes;—what the Event may be I fear to think;—but I muſt go thro' with it.

Enter Lovemore.

Mrs. *Love.* Mr. *Lovemore*, you're welcome home.

Love. Mrs. *Lovemore*, your Servant. (*without looking at her.*)

Mrs. *Love.* It's ſomewhat rare to ſee you at home ſo early.

Love. I ſaid I wou'd come home, did not I?—I always like to be as good as my word. —(What cou'd ſhe mean by this Uſage? to make an Appointment, and break it thus abruptly!) (*aſide.*

Mrs. *Love.* (He ſeems to muſe upon it.) (*aſide.*

Love. (I can't tell what to make of it,—ſhe does not mean to do ſo infamous a Thing as to jilt me!) (*aſide.*) Oh, Lord! I am wonderfully tir'd. (*Yawns, and ſinks into an arm'd Chair.*

Mrs. *Love.* You an't indiſpos'd, I hope, my Dear.

Love. No, my Dear, — I thank you, — I am very well;— a little fatigu'd only, with jolting over the Stones all the way from the City.—I ſtay'd to dine with the old Banker; —I have been there ever ſince I went out in the

the Morning.--Confoundedly tir'd.--Where's *William?*

Mrs. *Love.* Did you want any thing?

Love. Only my Cap and Slippers.—I am not in Spirits, I think. (*Yawns.*

Mrs. *Love.* You never are in Spirits at home, Mr. *Lovemore.*

Love. I beg your Pardon,— I never am any where more chearful; (*ſtretching his Arms.*) I wiſh I may die, if I an't very happy at home,—very (*yawns*)—very happy!

Mrs. *Love.* I can hear otherwiſe.—I'm inform'd that Mr. *Lovemore* is the Inſpirer of Mirth and good Humour wherever he goes.

Love. Oh! you over-rate me; upon my Soul you do.

Mrs. *Love.* I can hear, Sir, that no Perſon's Company is ſo acceptable to the Ladies; that 'tis your Wit that inſpirits every thing; —that you have your Compliment for one, your Smile for another, a Whiſper for a third, and ſo on, Sir; —you divide your Favours, and are every where, but at home, all Whim, Vivacity, and Spirit.

Love. No,—no,— (*Laughing,*) how can you talk ſo?—I ſwear, I can't help laughing at the Fancy. —I all Whim, Vivacity, and Spirit! I ſhall burſt my Sides. — How can you banter one ſo?— I divide my Favours too! — Oh, Heavens! — I can't ſtand this Raillery,—ſuch a Deſcription of me!—I, that am rather ſaturnine, and of a ſerious Caſt,

and

and inclin'd to be penſive! I can't help laughing at the Oddity of the Conceit!---Oh Lord! Oh Lord! (*laughs.*)

Mrs. *Love.* Juſt as you pleaſe, Sir. -- I ſee that I am ever to be treated with Indifference. (*walks acroſs the Stage.*)

Love. (*riſes and walks the contrary way.*) I can't put this Widow *Belmour* out of my Head! (*aſide.*)

Mrs. *Love.* If I had done any thing to provoke this Uſage,----- this cold, inſolent, Contempt---

Love. I ſhall never be at reſt 'till I know the Bottom of it. --- I wiſh I had done with that Buſineſs entirely; but my Deſires are kindled, and muſt be ſatisfy'd. (*aſide.*)

(*They walk for ſome time ſilently by each other.*)

Mrs. *Love.* What Part of my Conduct gives you Offence, Mr. *Lovemore?*

Love. Still harping upon that ungrateful String!---but, prithee, don't ſet me a laughing again. --- Offence! --- nothing gives me Offence, Child:---You know I am very fond.--- (*yawns and walks*)---I like you of all Things, and think you a moſt admirable Wife;----- prudent, managing, ---- careleſs of your own Perſon, and very attentive to mine;----- not much addicted to Pleaſure,--grave,--retir'd,-- and domeſtic;--- govern your Houſe,--- pay the Tradeſmens Bills, (*yawns,*) ſcold the Servants, and love your Huſband: --- Upon my Soul, a very good Wife!---As good a Sort of

of a Wife *(yawns)* as a body might wiſh to have.---Where's *William* ?----- I muſt go to Bed.——

Mrs. *Love.* To Bed ſo early ! --- Had not you better join the Company ?

Love. I ſhan't go out to-Night.

Mrs. *Love.* But I mean the Company in the Dining-Room.

Love. What Company ? *(ſtares at her.)*

Mrs. *Love.* That I invited to a Rout.

Love. A Rout in my Houſe !---- and you dreſſed out too !---What is all this ?

Mrs. *Love.* You have no Objection, I hope.——

Love. Objection !---no,---I like Company, you know, of all Things ;---I'll go and join them :---Who are they all ?

Mrs. *Love.* You know 'em all ; ----- and there's your Friend Sir *Brilliant* there.

Love. Is he there ?---I'm glad of it.---But pray now, how comes this about ?

Mrs. *Love.* I intend to do it often.

Love. Do ye ?

Mrs. *Love.* Ay, and not look tamely on, while you revel luxuriouſly in a Courſe of Pleaſure ; I ſhall purſue my own Plan of Diverſion.

Love. Do ſo, do ſo, Ma'am, the Change in your Temper will be very pleaſing.

Mrs. *Love.* I ſhall indeed, Sir; --- I'm in earneſt.

Love. By all means follow your own Inclinations.

Mrs. *Love.* And ſo I ſhall Sir, I aſſure you. *(ſings.)*

No more I pine,
Content is mine;
That Sunſhine of the Breaſt!
The Pangs of Love
No more I prove;
No Cares diſturb my Reſt.

Love. What the Devil is come over her? and what, in the Name of Wonder, does all this mean?

Mrs. *Love.* Mean, Sir! ---- it means ---- it means---it means--how can you aſk me what it means?---Well, to be ſure, the Sobriety of that Queſtion! --- Do you think a Woman of Spirit can have Leiſure to tell her Meaning, when ſhe is all Air, Alertneſs, Pleaſure, and Enjoyment?

Love. She's mad!—Stark mad!

Mrs. *Love.* You're miſtaken, Sir;----- not mad, but in Spirits, that's all; --- no Offence, I hope.--Am I too flighty for you?-perhaps I am; --- you are of a ſaturnine Diſpoſition, inclin'd to think a little, or ſo.--Well, don't let me interrupt you; don't let me be of any Inconvenience.--that would be the impoliteſt thing!--- for a married Couple to interfere and encroach on each other's Pleaſures!--- Oh hideous!

deous! it would be gothic to the laſt Degree! Ha! ha! ha!

Love. (*forcing a Laugh,*) Ha! ha!---Ma'am,----you, Ha! ha! you are perfectly right.

Mrs. *Love.* Nay but I don't like that Laugh now;---I poſitively don't like it; ---can't you laugh out as you ~~were~~ us'd to do? for my part, I'm determin'd to do nothing elſe all the reſt of my Life.

Love. This is the moſt aſtoniſhing thing! Ma'am, I don't rightly comprehend——

Mrs. *Love.* Oh Lud! Oh Lud! ----- with that important Face!---Well, but come, now, what don't you comprehend?

Love. There is ſomething in this Treatment that I don't ſo well——

Mrs. *Love.* Oh! are you there, Sir? ----- How quickly they, who have no Senſibility for the Peace and Happineſs of others, can feel for themſelves, Mr. *Lovemore!* --- But that's a grave Reflection, and I hate Reflection.

Love. What has ſhe got into her Head?--This ſudden Change, Mrs. *Lovemore*, let me tell you, is a little alarming, and ———

Mrs. *Love.* Nay, don't be frighten'd, ---- there is no harm in innocent Mirth, I hope; —never look ſo grave upon it. — I aſſure you, Sir, that, tho', on your Part, you ſeem to have determin'd to offer conſtant Indignities to your Wife,—— and tho' the Laws of Retaliation

wou'd

wou'd in ſome ſort exculpate her, if, when provok'd to the utmoſt,—exaſperated beyond all enduring, ſhe ſhould, in her Turn, make him know what it is to receive an Injury in the tendereſt Point——

Love. Madam! (*angrily.*)

Mrs. *Love.* Well, well, don't be frighten'd I ſay, I ſhan't retaliate: — my own Honour will ſecure you there; —— you may depend upon it.—You won't come and play a Game at Cards?--Well, do as you like;--well,--you won't come? No, no, I ſee you won't.—What ſay you to a Bit of Supper with us?—Nor that neither?—Follow your Inclinations, it is not material where a body eats.—The Company expects me; your Servant, Mr. *Lovemore*, yours, yours. (*Exit, ſinging.*)

Love. alone. This is a Frolic I never ſaw her in before!——Laugh all the reſt of my Life!—Laws of Retaliation!—an Injury in the tendereſt Point!—the Company expects me,—your Servant my Dear, yours, yours!--(*mimicking her.*) What the Devil is all this?---Some of her Female Friends have been tampering with her. —Zouns!—I muſt begin to look a little ſharp after Madam.—I'll go this Moment into the Card-Room, and watch whom ſhe whiſpers with, whom ſhe ogles with, and every Circumſtance that can lead to——— (*going.*)

Enters Muſlin *in a hurry.*

Muſlin. Madam, Madam, —— here's your Letter,—I wou'd not for all the World that my Maſter —

Love. What, is ſhe mad too? What's the matter, Woman?

Muſlin. Nothing, Sir,—nothing,—I wanted a word with my Lady,—that's all, Sir.

Love. You wou'd not for the World that your Maſter,—What was you going to ſay? —What Paper's that?

Muſlin. Paper, Sir!

Love. Let me ſee it.

Muſlin. Lard, Sir!—how can you aſk a Body for ſuch a thing. It's a Letter to me, Sir, — a Letter from the Country, — a Letter from my Siſter, Sir,—ſhe bids me buy her a *Shiver-de-Fize* Cap, and a Sixteenth in the Lottery; and tells me of a Number ſhe dreamt of, that's all, Sir;—I'll put it up.

Love. Let me look at it;—give it me this Moment? (*reads.*) To Mrs. *Lovemore!*—*Brilliant Faſhion.* This is a Letter from the Country, is it?

Muſlin. That, Sir,—that is—no, Sir,—no, —that's not Siſter's Letter.—If you'll give me that back, Sir, I'll ſhew you the right one.

Love. Where did you get this?

Muſlin. Sir?

Love.

Love. Where did you gett it? — Tell me Truth.

Muſlin. Dear heart, you fright a Body ſo! —in the Parlour, Sir,—I found it there.

Love. Very well!—Leave the Room.

Muſlin. The Devil fetch it, I was never ſo out in my Politicks, in all my Days! (*Exit.*

Love. alone. A pretty Epiſtle, truly, this ſeems to be;—let me read it.

"Permit me, dear Madam, to throw myſelf on my Knees, (for on my Knees I muſt addreſs you) and, in that humble Poſture, to implore your Compaſſion."—(*Compaſſion with a Vengeance on him!—*) (*walks about*) "Think you ſee me now with tender, melting, ſupplicating Eyes, languiſhing at your Feet:"—(*Very well, Sir!—*)—"Can you find it in your Heart to perſiſt in Cruelty?—Grant me but Acceſs to you once more, and, in addition to what I already ſaid this Morning, I will urge ſuch Motives"—(*urge Motives, will ye!—*) "as will ſuggeſt to you, that you ſhou'd no longer heſitate, in Gratitude, to reward him, who, ſtill on his Knees, here makes a Vow to you of eternal Conſtancy and Love."

Brilliant Faſhion."

So; ſo! ſo!—your very humble Servant, Sir *Brilliant Faſhion!*—This is your Friendſhip for me, is it?—you're mighty kind indeed, Sir;—but I thank you as much as if you had really done me the favour;—and, Mrs. *Lovemore*, I'm your humble Servant, too!—

She

She intends to laugh all the the reſt of her Life! This Letter will change her Note.--- Odſo, yonder ſhe comes along the Gallery, and Sir *Brilliant* in full Chaſe of her. --- They come this way; --- cou'd I but detect them both, now! — I'll ſtep aſide, and who knows but the Devil may tempt 'em to their undoing, --- at leaſt I'll try, --- a polite Huſband I am!--There's the Coaſt clear for you, Madam. (*Exit.*

Enters Mrs. Lovemore, *Sir* Brilliant *after her.*

Mrs. *Love.* I tell you, Sir *Brilliant*, your Civility is odious, — your Compliments fulſome, — and your Solicitations impertinent, Sir.—I muſt make uſe of harſh Language, Sir; — you provoke me to it and I can't refrain.

Sir *Brill.* (By all my Hopes we are now conveniently alone!) (*aſide.*) Not retiring to Solitude and Diſcontent again, I hope, Madam! —Have a Care, my dear Mrs. *Lovemore* of a Relapſe.

Mrs. *Love.* No Danger of that, Sir, don't be ſolicitous about me. — Why wou'd you leave the Company? let me entreat you to return, Sir.

Sir *Brill.* By Heaven, there is more Rapture in being one Moment *vis-a-vis* with you, than in the Company of a whole Drawing-Room of Beauties.—Round you are melting

Pleaſures, tender Tranſports, youthful Loves, and blooming Graces, all unfelt, neglected, and deſpiſ'd, by a taſteleſs, cold, languid, unimpaſſion'd, Huſband, while they might be all ſo much better employ'd to the Purpoſes of Extacy and Bliſs.

Mrs. *Love.* I am amaz'd, Sir, at this Liberty!—what Action of my Life has authoriz'd ſuch barefac'd Aſſurance? — and for what Reaſon do you think ſo meanly of me, as to imagine that I have not a greater Regard for my Reputation, and for what the World may ſay, Sir?

Sir *Brill.* The World, Ma'am!—the World will juſtify you:--ſhe ſerv'd him right:--they will all agree in it,—there will be but one Opinion about it, — that is, Ma'am, if the World ſhould know it;—but our Loves may be as conceal'd, as Secrets undiſcover'd yet by mortal Eye. —(By all that's ſoft, it goes down with her like a Diſh of Tea!) (*aſide.*) And ſo, Madam, ſince I have convinc'd you, ---and ſince the Time, the Place, and mutual Ardor, all concur---

Mrs. *Love.* Sir, I am not to be treated in this Manner;--- and, I aſſure you, Sir, that, were I not afraid of the evil Conſequences that might follow, I ſhould not heſitate a Moment to acquaint Mr. *Lovemore* with your whole Behaviour.

Sir *Brill.* (She won't tell her Huſband, then; ---a charming Creature! and Bleſſings on her for

for ſo convenient a Hint!---ſhe yields, by all that's wicked!--What ſhall I ſay to overwhelm her Senſes in a Flood of Nonſenſe?) (*aſide.*

Go, my Heart's Envoys, tender Sighs, make haſte,---
Still drink delicious Poiſon from thy Eye,--
Raptures and Paradiſe
Pant on thy Lip, and to thy Heart be preſs'd.

(Forcing her all this time.

Enter Mr. Lovemore.

Love. Zoons, this is too much!

Sir *Brill.* What the Devil's the Matter now? (*Kneels down to buckle his Shoe.*) This confounded Buckle is always plaguing me!---My dear Boy, *Lovemore*,---I rejoice to ſee thee.

(*They ſtand looking at each other.*

Love. And have you the Confidence to look me in the Face?

Sir *Brill.* I was telling your Lady, here, of the moſt whimſical Adventure ---

Love. Don't add the Meanneſs of Falſhood to the black Attempt of invading your Friend's Happineſs! --- I did imagine, Sir, from the long Intercourſe that has ſubſiſted between us, that you might have had Delicacy enough, Feeling enough, Honour enough, Sir,---not to meditate an Injury like this!

Sir *Brill.* (Ay, ay, it's all over, I'm detected!) (*aſide.*) Mr. *Lovemore*, if begging your Pardon for this Raſhneſs will any ways atone--

Love.

Love. No, Sir, nothing can atone. The Provocation you have given me, wou'd juſtify my drawing upon you this Inſtant, did not that Lady and this Roof protect you.

Sir *Brill.* But, Mr. *Lovemore* ---

Love. But, Sir ---

Sir *Brill.* I only begg---

Love. Pray, Sir, --- Sir, I inſiſt---I won't hear a word.

Sir *Brill.* I declare, upon my Honour ---

Love. Honour! for Shame, Sir *Brilliant*, don't uſe the Word.

Sir *Brill.* If begging Pardon of that Lady --

Love. That Lady!---I deſire you will never ſpeak to that Lady.

Sir *Brill.* Nay, but, prythee, *Lovemore!*

Love. No, Sir, no;---I have done with you for the preſent.---As for you, Madam, I am ſatisfy'd with your Conduct.---I was, indeed, a little alarm'd; but I was a Witneſs of your Behaviour, and I'm above harbouring low Suſpicions.

Sir *Brill.* Allow me but a Word.---

Love. No more, Sir, I have done.---

Sir. *Brill.* Let me but explain.---

Love. Zoons!---I'll go into another Room to avoid you. (*Going, ſees Mrs.* Bellmour.) Hell and Deſtruction, what Fiend is conjur'd up here?---Zounds, let me make my Eſcape out of the Houſe! (*Runs to the other Door.*

Mrs. *Love.* I'll ſecure this Door; --- you muſt not go, my Dear! (*Stops him.*

Love. S'death, Madam, let me paſs.

Mrs. *Love.* Nay, you ſhall ſtay, I want to introduce an Acquaintance of mine to you.

Love. I deſire, Madam ——

Enters Mrs. Bellmour.

Mrs. *Bell.* My Lord, my Lord *Etheridge*; I am heartily glad to ſee your Lordſhip. (*taking hold of him.*)

Mrs. *Love.* Do my Dear, let me introduce this Lady to you. (*turning him to her.*)

Love. Here's the Devil and all to do! (*aſide.*)

Mrs. *Bell.* My Lord, this is the moſt fortunate Encounter! ——

Love. I wiſh I were Fifty Miles off! (*aſide.*)

Mrs. *Love.* Mrs. *Bellmour*, give me Leave to introduce Mr. *Lovemore* to you. (*turning him to her.*)

Mrs. *Bell.* No, my dear Ma'am, let me introduce Lord *Etheridge* to you: (*pulling him.*) My Lord —

Sir *Brill.* In the Name of Wonder, what is all this?

Mrs. *Love.* My dear Ma'am, you're miſtaken; this is my Huſband!

Mrs. *Bell.* Pardon me, Ma'am, 'tis my Lord *Etheridge.*

Mrs. *Love.* My Dear, how can you be ſo ill-bred in your own Houſe?—Mrs. *Bellmour*, —this is Mr. *Lovemore.*

Love.

Love. Are you going to toſs me in a Blanket, Madam?—call-up the reſt of your People, if you are!

Mrs. *Bell.* Pſhaw! —— Prithee, now, my Lord, leave off your Humours;—Mrs. *Lovemore*, this is my Lord *Etheridge*, a Lover of mine, who has made Propoſals of Marriage to me,

Love. Confuſion! lett me gett rid of theſe two Furies! (*breaks-away from them.*)

Mrs. *Bell.* (*follows him,*)—My Lord, I ſay! my Lord *Etheridge!* — won't your Lordſhip know me?

Love. This is the moſt damnable Accident! (*aſide.*)

Mrs. *Bell.* I hope your Lordſhip has not forgott your Appointment at my Houſe this Evening.

Love. Ay, now my Turn is come! (*aſide.*)

Mrs. *Bell.* Prithee, my Lord, what have I done, that you treat me with this Coldneſs? Come, come, you ſhall have a Wife, I will take Compaſſion on you.

Love. Damnation! I can't ſtand this! (*aſide.*)

Mrs. *Bell.* Come, cheer-up, my Lord;—What the duce, your Dreſs is alter'd!-What's become of the Star and the Ribband?—And ſo, the gay, the florid, the *magnifique*, Lord *Etheridge*, dwindles down into plain Mr. *Lovemore*, the Married Man! Mr. *Lovemore*,

your moſt obedient, very humble, Servant, Sir!

Love. (I can't bear to feel my myſelf in ſo ridiculous a Circumſtance!) (*aſide.*)

Mrs. *Bell.* I beg my Compliments to your Friend Mrs. *Loveit*; and I am much oblig'd to you both for your very honourable Deſigns!—(*curtſeying to him.*)

Love. I never was ſo aſham'd in all my Life! ---

Sir *Brill.* So, ſo, ſo, all his Pains were to hide the Star from me.—The Diſcovery is a perfect Cordial to my dejected Spirits.

Mrs. *Bell.* Mrs. *Lovemore*, I cannot ſufficiently acknowledge the Providence, that directed you to pay me a Viſit, tho' I was wholly unknown to you; and I ſhall henceforth conſider you as my Deliverer.

Love. (Zoons! It was ſhe that fainted away in the Cloſet, and be damn'd to her Jealouſy.) (*aſide.*)

Sir *Brill.* By all that's whimſical, an odd ſort of an Adventure this!— my Lord, (*advances to him,*) My Lord, —my Lord *Etheridge*, as the Man ſays in the Play, "Your Lordſhip's right welcome back to *Denmark*."

Love. (Now he comes upon me!—Oh! I'm in a fine Situation!) (*aſide.*)

Sir *Brill.* My Lord, I hope that ugly Pain in your Lordſhip's Side, is abated.

Love. Abſurd, and ridiculous!) (*aſide.*)

Sir

Sir *Brill.* There is nothing forming there I hope, my Lord?

Mrs. *Love.* (*apart with Mrs.* Bellmour,) I begin now to feel for him, and to pity his Uneaſineſs.

Sir *Brill.* Pray, my Lord, don't you think it a baſe Thing to invade the Happineſs of a Friend? Or to do him a clandeſtine Wrong? or to injure him with the Woman he loves?

Love. To cutt the Matter ſhort with you, Sir; we are both Raſcals.

Sir *Brill.* Raſcal!

Love. Ay, both! We are two very pretty Fellows indeed!

Mrs. *Bell.* I am glad to find that you are at length awaken'd into a Senſe of your Error. (*to* Lovemore.)

Love. I am, Madam, and I am frank enough to own it. — I am above attempting to diſguiſe my Feelings, when I am conſcious they are on the Side of Truth and Honour; — and, Madam, with a true Remorſe, — I aſk your Pardon.

Mrs. *Bell.* Upon certain Terms, I don't know but I may ſign and ſeal your Pardon.

Love. Terms! What Terms? ———

Mrs. *Bell.* That you make due Expiation of your Guilt to that Lady.

Love. That Lady, Ma'am! — That Lady has no Reaſon to complain.

Mrs. *Love.* No Reaſon to complain, Mr. *Lovemore!*

Love.

Love. No Madam,—none! for, whatever may have been my Imprudences, they have had their Source in your Conduct.

Mrs. *Love.* In my Conduct, Sir!

Love. In your Conduct!—I here declare, before this Company,—and I am above palliating the Matter, I here declare, that no Man in *England* cou'd be better inclin'd to domeſtic Happineſs, if you, Madam, on your Part, had been willing to make Home agreeable.

Mrs. *Love.* There I confeſs he touches me! (*aſide.*)

Love. You cou'd take Pains enough before Marriage,——you would put forth all your Charms,—practiſe all your Arts,—and make your Features pleaſe by Rule;——for ever changing,—running an eternal Round of Variety:—And all this to win my Affections:—But, when you had won them, you did not think them worth your keeping.—Never dreſs'd,—penſive,—ſilent,—melancholy;—and the only Entertainment in my Houſe, was the dear Pleaſure of a dull conjugal *Tête-à-Tête*; and all this Inſipidity, becauſe you think the ſole Merit of a Wife conſiſts in her Virtue:—A fine Way of amuſing a Huſband truly!

Sir *Brill.* Upon my Soul, and ſo it is!—(*laughing.*)

Enter

Enters Muſlin.

Muſlin. O Gemini! Gemini! here's ſuch a Piece of work,---what ſhall I do?--- my poor dear Lady! *(Crying bitterly.)*

Love. Is the Woman crazy?

Muſlin. Oh! Madam, --- forgive me, my dear Madam,---I did not do it on purpoſe,--as I hope for Mercy, I did not.

Mrs. *Love.* What did not you do?

Muſlin. I did not intend to give it him, I would have ſeen him gibbetted firſt! --- I found the Letter in the Parlour, Madam, ---I knew it was the ſame Letter I had deliver'd to you, and my Curioſity did make me peep into it. ---- Says my Curioſity, ---- "Now, *Muſlin*, you may gratify yourſelf by finding-out the Contents of that Letter, which you have ſuch a violent Itching for." ---- My Curioſity ſaid ſo, Ma'am, and then, I own, Ma'am, my Reſpect for you did ſay to me, "Huſſey, how dare you meddle with what does not belong to you?--- keep your Diſtance, and let your Miſtreſs's Secrets alone."—But then, upon that, in comes my Curioſity again, and ſays my Curioſity, "Read it, I tell you, *Muſlin*; a Woman of Spirit ſhou'd know every thing."—"Let it alone, you Jade," ſays my Reſpect.—"It's as much as your Place is worth!"—"There's more Places than one," ſays my Curioſity, "and ſo read it, I tell you, *Muſlin*."—I did read it, --- what

— what could I do? Heaven help me,—I did read it,——I don't go to deny it,—I don't, I don't! (*Crying.*)

Love. Don't keep ſuch an Uproar, Woman.

Muſlin. And then, after I read it, thinks me, I, I'll give this to my Miſtreſs directly, and that perfidious thing her Huſband ſhall not ſee it; — and ſo, as my ill Stars would wou'd have it, as I was looking for you, I run my hand full in the Lion's mouth! (*Crying.*

Sir *Brill.* (What an unlucky Jade it has been!) (*aſide.*)

Mrs. *Love.* Well, have done, *Muſlin*; this is too much.

Mrs. *Bell.* Upon my word but ſhe gives him his own.—I ſuppoſe you own the Truth of what ſhe ſays, Mr. *Lovemore.*

Love. Pray, Madam, does that Lady own the Truth of what I have ſaid?

Mrs. *Love.* Sir, I am ſenſible there is too much Truth in what you ſay; this Lady has open'd my Eyes, and convinc'd me that there was a Miſtake in my former Conduct.

Love. Come, come, you need not ſay any more:--I forgive you,—I forgive you.

Mrs. *Love.* Forgive me! I like that Air of Confidence, when you know, that, on my Side, it is, at worſt, an Error in Judgment, whereas on yours —

Mrs.

Mrs. *Bell.* Come, come, you know each other's Faults and Virtues; and ſo you have nothing to do but to mend the former, and enjoy the latter.—There,--- there, kiſs and Friends.—There, Mrs. *Lovemore*, take your reclaim'd Libertine to your Arms.

Love. It is in your Power, Madam, to make a reclaim'd Libertine of me indeed.

Mrs. *Love.* From this Moment it ſhall be our mutual Study to pleaſe each other.

(*They embrace.*

Sir *Brill. Lovemore*, may I preſume to hope for Pardon at that Lady's Hands?

Love. My dear Confederate in Vice, your Pardon is granted.—Two ſad Dogs we have been!—but, come, give us your Hand,—we have us'd each other damnably;------ for the future we will endeavour to make each other amends.

Sir *Brill.* And ſo we will.---Ma'am, ſince my Lord decamps from before the Town, may I preſume to hope ---

Mrs. *Bell.* I poſitively forbid you the leaſt Grain of Hope; whenever I take to myſelf a Huſband, I muſt be convinc'd, firſt, that he will anſwer the Trouble of keeping him.

Sir *Brill.* My dear Ma'am, by all that's --

Mrs. *Bell.* No Swearing;--I poſitively will have my own way; you ſhall perform Quarantine before I ſpeak to you again.

Love. She's your's, Man, ſhe's your's; --- ſhe'll throw herſelf into your Arms in a Day or two.--- And, now, I heartily congratulate the whole Company, that this Buſineſs has had ſo happy a Tendency to convince each of us of our Folly.

Mrs. *Bell.* Pray, Sir, don't draw me into a Share of your Folly.

Love. Come, come, my dear Ma'am, you are not without your Share of it. This will teach you, for the future, to be content with one Lover at a time, without liſtening to a Fellow you know nothing of, --- becauſe he aſſumes a Title, and reports well of himſelf.

Mrs. *Bell.* The Reproof is juſt, I grant it.

Love. Come, let us join the Company chearfully, keep our own Secrets, and not make ourſelves a Town-Talk ;--- though, I don't know, but, if this Tranſaction were ſent abroad into the World, it might prove a very uſeful Leſſon. The Men wou'd ſee how their Paſſions may carry them into the Danger of wounding the Boſom of a Friend,-- the Ladies wou'd learn, that, after the Marriage-Rites, they ſhou'd not ſuffer their Powers of pleaſing to languiſh away, but ſhou'd ſtill remember to ſacrifice to the Graces.

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